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EDUCATIONAL DEPOSITORY

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S

IONS OF EXPERIENCED EDUCATIONISTS

IN THE

UNITED STATES, ONTARIO AND ELSEWHERE,

AS TO THE POLICY OF MAINTAINING

THE EDUCATIONAL DEPOSITORY

OF ONTARIO,

FOR THE SUPPLY OF THE PUBLIC AND HIGH SCHOOLS WITH MAPS, CHARTS, APPARATUS, PRIZE AND LIBRARY BOOKS.

(Reprinted from the Chief Superintendent's Annual Report for 1872.)

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PREFATORY NOTE.

For the information of parties who have taken an interest in the question of the supply of the Public and High Schools with Maps, Charts, Apparatus, Prize and Library Books, etc., from the Depository, it has been thought advisable to strike off a few extra Copies of that part of the Chief Superintendent's Report, which relates to the subject. The information thus presented has been arranged in three parts, as follows :—

I. Explanatory Statement of the number and value of Maps, Charts, Apparatus, Prize and Library Books sent out from the Depository in 1872, with remarks on the general question, and quotations from various authorities on the subject.

II. Copy of Circular sent to various Educationists with a view to elicit their views on the Depository question, with an explanation of the case.

III. Replies received from Educationists in the United States, Ontario and elsewhere in reference to the Circular.

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PART I.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

OF THE NUMBER AND VALUE OF MAPS, CHARTS, APPARATUS, PRIZES AND LIBRARY BOOKS, SENT OUT FROM THE EDUCATIONAL DEPOSITORY DURING 1872, WITH REMARKS ON THE GENERAL QUESTION OF THE DEPOSITORY, AND QUOTATIONS FROM VARIOUS AUTHORITIES ON THE SUBJECT.

FREE PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

1. The amount expended in library books during 1872, is $4,421, of which one-half has been provided from local sources. The number of volumes supplied is 6,015.

2. The value of Public Free Libraries furnished to the end of 1872 was $143,247—increase, $4,422. The *number of Libraries*, exclusive of subdivisions. 1,226—increase 51. The *number of volumes* in these libraries was 253,512—increase 9,625.

3. *Sunday School Libraries* reported, 2,899—increase 54. The *number of volumes* in these libraries was 365,857.

4. *Other Public Libraries* reported, 185. The *number of volumes* in these libraries was 130,873.

5. *The total number of Public Libraries* in Ontario is 4,310. The total of the *number of volumes* in these libraries is 750,242.

6. *Number and classification of public libraries and prize books which have been sent out from the Depository of the Department from* 1853 *to* 1872 *inclusive.* The total number of volumes for *Public Free Libraries* sent out 253,512. The classification of these books is as follows:—*History*, 43,889; *Zoology and Physiology*, 15,652; *Botany*, 2,872; *Phenomena*, 6,244; *Physical Science*, 4,877; *Geology*, 2,169; *Natural Philosophy and Manufactures*, 13,485; *Chemistry*, 1,576; *Agricultural Chemistry*, 795; *Practical Agriculture*, 9,873; *Literature*, 24,178; *Voyages*, 22,420; *Biography*, 29,067; *Tales and Sketches, Practical Life*, 71,415; *Fiction*, 1,678; *Teachers' Library*, 3,312. Total number of *Prize Books* sent out, 627,590. *Grand Total* of library and prize books (including, but not included in the above, 18,563 volumes sent to Mechanics' Institutes and Sunday Schools, paid for wholly from local sources), 899,049.

7. In regard to the Free Public Libraries, it may be proper to repeat the explanation that these libraries are managed by Local Municipal Councils and School Trustees (chiefly by the latter), under regulations prepared according to law by the Council of Public Instruction. The books are procured by the Education Department, from publishers both in Europe and America, at as low prices for cash as possible; and a carefully-prepared classified catalogue of about 4,000 works (which have been approved by the Council of Public Instruction) is printed, and sent to the Trustees of each School Section, and the Council of each Municipality. From this select and comprehensive catalogue the local municipal and school authorities desirous of establishing and increasing a library select such works as they think proper, or request the Department to do so for them, and receive from the Department not only the books at prices about from twenty-five to thirty per cent. cheaper than the ordinary retail prices, but an apportionment in books of 100

per cent. upon the amount which they provide for the purchase of such books. None of these works are disposed of to any private parties, except Teachers and School Inspectors, for their professional use; and the rule is not to keep a large supply of any one work on hand, so as to prevent the accumulation of stock, and to add to the catalogue yearly new and useful books which are constantly issuing from the European and American Press. There is also kept in the Department a record of every public library, and of the books which have been furnished for it, so that additions can be made to such libraries without liability to send second copies of the same books.

Summary of the Maps, Apparatus, and Prize Books Supplied to the Counties, Cities, Towns and Villages During the Year.

1. The amount expended in supplying maps, apparatus, and prize books for the Schools, was $42,266; increase, $12,189. The one-half of this sum was provided voluntarily from local sources; in all cases the books or articles are applied for, and fifty per cent. of the value paid for by the parties concerned before being sent. The number of Maps of the World sent out was 401; of Europe, 516; of Asia, 401; of Africa, 364; of America, 453; of British North America and Canada, 546; of Great Britain and Ireland, 242; of Single Hemispheres, 351; of Scriptural and Classical, 191; of other charts and maps, 827; of globes, 275; of sets of apparatus, 65; of other pieces of school apparatus, 2046; of Historical and other Lessons, in sheets, 31,261. Number of volumes of *prize books*, 63,721.

2. It may be proper to repeat that the map, apparatus, and prize book branch of the School System was not established till 1855. From that time to the end of 1872, the amount expended for maps, apparatus, and prize books (not including Public Libraries), was $365,384, one-half of which has been provided from local sources, from which all applications have been made. The number of maps of the *World* furnished is 3,036; of *Europe*, 4,614; of *Asia*, 3,726; of *Africa*, 3,422; of *America*, 3,916; of *British North America, and Canada*, 4,462; of *Great Britain and Ireland*, 4,111; of *Single Hemispheres*, 3,115; of *Classical and Scriptural Maps*, 2,963; *other Maps and Charts* 6,718; *Globes*, 2,340; *sets of apparatus*, 509; single articles of school apparatus, 17,127; *Historical and other Lesson sin Sheets*, 198,528; *volumes of Prize Books*, 627,590.

3. I also repeat the following explanation of this branch of the Department:—

The maps, globes, and various articles of School apparatus sent out by the Department, apportioning one hundred per cent upon whatever sum or sums are provided from local sources, are nearly all manufactured in Ontario, and at lower prices than imported articles of the same kind have been heretofore obtained. The globes and maps manufactured (even the material) in Ontario contain the latest discoveries of voyagers and travellers, and are executed in the best manner, as are tellurions, mechanical powers, numeral frames, geometrical powers, &c., &c. All this has been done by employing competitive private skill and enterprise. The Department has furnished the manufacturers with copies and models, purchasing certain quantities of the articles when manufactured, at stipulated prices, then permitting and encouraging them to manufacture and dispose of these articles themselves to any private parties desiring them, as the Department supplies them only to Municipal and School authorities. In this way new domestic manufactures are introduced, and mechanical and artistical skill and enterprise are encouraged, and many aids to School and domestic instruction, heretofore unknown amongst us, or only attainable in particular cases with difficulty, and at great expense, are now easily and cheaply accessible to private families, as well as to Municipal and School authorities all over the country. It is also worthy of remark, that this important branch of the Education Department is self-supporting. All the expenses of it are reckoned in the cost of the articles and books procured, so that it does not cost either the public revenue or School fund a penny beyond what is apportioned to the Municipalities and School Sections providing a like sum or sums for the purchase of books, maps, globes, and various articles of School apparatus. I know of no other instance, in either the United States or in Europe, of a branch of a Public Department of this kind conferring so great a benefit upon the public, and without adding to public expense.

The following Tables will also be found of much interest in connection with this part of our School System.

(1) TABLE SHEWING THE VALUE OF ARTICLES SENT OUT FROM THE EDUCATION DEPOSITORY DURING THE YEARS 1851 TO 1872, INCLUSIVE.

YEAR.	Articles on which the 100 per cent. has been apportioned from the Legislative Grant.		Articles sold at Catalogue prices without any apportionment from the Legislative Grant.	Total value of Library, Prize & School Books, Maps and Apparatus despatched.
	Public School Library Books.	Maps, Apparatus and Prize Books.		
	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.
1851	.....	.....	1,414	1,414
1852	.....	.....	2,981	2,981
1853	.....	.....	4,233	4,233
1854	51,376	.....	5,514	56,890
1855	9,947	4,655	4,389	18,991
1856	7,205	9,320	5,726	22,251
1857	16,200	18,118	6,452	40,770
1858	3,982	11,810	6,972	22,764
1859	5,805	11,905	6,679	24,389
1860	5,289	16,832	5,416	27,537
1861	4,084	16,251	4,894	25,229
1862	3,273	16,194	4,844	24,311
1863	4,022	15,887	3,461	23,370
1864	1,931	17,260	4,454	23,645
1865	2,400	20,224	3,818	26,442
1866	4,375	27,114	4,172	35,661
1867	3,404	28,270	7,419	39,093
1868	4,420	25,923	4,793	35,136
1869	4,655	24,475	5,678	34,808
1870	3,396	28,810	6,175	38,381
1871	3,300	30,076	8,138	41,514
1872	4,421	42,265	10,481	57,167

(2) BOOKS IMPORTS INTO ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

The following Statistical Table has been compiled from the "Trade and Navigation Returns" for the years specified, showing the gross value of books (not maps or School apparatus) imported into Ontario and Quebec.

YEAR.	Value of Books entered at Ports in the Province of Quebec.	Value of Books entered at Ports in the Province of Ontario.	Total value of Books imported into the two Provinces.	Proportion imported for the Education Department of Ontario.
	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.
1850	101,880	141,700	243,580	84
1851	120,700	171,732	292,432	3,296
1852	141,176	159,268	300,444	1 288
1853	158,700	254,280	412,980	22,764
1854	171,452	307,808	479,260	44,060
1855	194,356	338,792	533,148	25,624
1856	208,636	427,992	636.628	10,208
1857	224,400	309,172	533,572	6,028
1858	171,255	191,942	363,197	10,692
1859	139,057	184,304	323,361	5,508
1860	155,604	252,504	408,108	8,846
1861	185,612	344,621	530,233	7,782
1862	183,987	249,234	433,221	7 800
1863	184,652	276,673	461,325	4,085
½ of 1864	93,308	127,233	220,541	4 668
1864-5	189,386	200,304	389,690	5 922
1865-6	222,559	247,749	470,308	14 749
1866-7	233,837	273,615	507,452	20,743
1867-8	224,582	254,048	478,630	12,374
1868-9	278,914	373,758	652,672	11,874
1869-1870	220,371	351,171	571,542	13,019
1870-1871	146,435	411,518	557,953	13,078
1871-1872	212,644	477,581	690,225	20,315

(3) Explanatory Remarks on the Working on the Depository.

As certain parties have objected to the Depositories for the supply of High and Public Schools with maps, charts, apparatus, prize and library books, as an interference with private trade, I caused a circular to be addressed to each of the leading educationists in the United States and in the other Provinces, &c. ; also to the county, city and town Inspectors of Public Schools in this Province. The circular of enquiry, with the replies which I have received, will be found on pages 15 and 19.

(4) The General Question Practically Discussed.

In every country the interests of education, at least in its elementary organization, are committed to the care and oversight of some department of Government. Experience proves the necessity of doing so. But, it may be asked : "What is expected of such a department in its administration of the system?" "Is it the merely perfunctory duty of keeping a certain statutory machinery in motion, receiving formal reports, and making the same in return, which is expected? Or is it the dealing with the great interest of popular education as if it were the nation's life blood, every pulsation of which indicated a healthy, vigorous growth of intellectual and moral life, or the torpidity of bare existence, maintained at large cost, but producing little fruit and no satisfactory returns?" The prevention of this latter, and the promotion of the former are, we think, the true objects for which popular education is especially entrusted to the care and oversight of a responsible public department. If it be so, the question then is, "How can this be best accomplished, and in what light should the Schools be regarded and treated, so as to bring about the best possible results?" whether as the joint property of the State and people, their interests should be paramount to private interests, or should they be treated merely as institutions that should be made to subserve the interests of the trades and professions, whether it be of book-sellers or of private schools, or institutions for the training of School-masters.

(5) Practice and Opinions of American Educationists in regard to a Depository.

The Commissioner of Public Schools in the State of Rhode Island, in discussing the question of School libraries in his report, thus remarks :

"*The plan of providing such district School libraries, adopted by the Parliament of Canada West, is undoubtedly the wisest that has yet been acted upon.* It is in short this :—The Parliament by vote appropriated a specific sum to purchase a suitable number of books, charts and articles of apparatus for Schools and School libraries. This sum was expended under the direction of the Superintendent of Public Education, and a large Depository of excellent and select books for the reading of youth and older persons was made at the Office of Education. Whenever any School district or municipality wishes to form a library, it may send to the office of the General Superintendent a sum not less than five dollars, and the Superintendent adds one hundred per cent. to the sum, and returns, at cost price, such books to the district as may, by a committee or otherwise, have been selected from the printed catalogue of the Depository. Thus the books that go into libraries are books that have been well examined, and contain nothing that is frivolous, or that could poison the morals of those who read them ; the libraries purchase them at the wholesale price, and, of course, can obtain a much larger amount of reading matter for their money than as though they had each made the purchase direct from the booksellers for themselves, and at the same time they are stimulated to do something for themselves, as well as to ask that something may be done for them. It is believed that some such plan might be carried into effect in our own State greatly to the profit of the whole community."

In my *Special Report* to the Legislature in 1858, in regard to the State of New York, I said :—

"The unsatisfactory working and declining state of the Public School library system in the State of New York, as detailed in a preceding page, is a sufficient illustration of the fruits of what is demanded by the bookselling assailants of our public library system, in a country where the private book trade is much more extended in its supplies and operations than in Upper Canada.

"Whether, therefore, our system of providing public libraries, as well as maps globes, and other School apparatus, be considered in regard to the higher or lower ground

above stated, the conclusion is that which was expressed by the President of the American Association for the Advancement of Education, at a late anniversary of that noble society, as quoted by the Earl of Elgin in a speech at Glasgow, after his return from Canada. The report says: 'The President made some remarks on the difficulty in the United States of procuring proper libraries for Schools, keeping out bad books and procuring good ones at reasonable rates, *and he strongly recommended* the system adopted by the Education Department at Toronto, Canada West.'"

Examples of the practice in other States, and in Nova Scotia, Australia, &c. (which are in the main similar to that in our own Province), will be found on pages 40 and 43 of the *Special Report* just quoted, and pages 100 and 101 of the *Journal of Education* for June, 1867.

(6) Cautions and Warnings of American Educationists.

We have already cited the opinion of two prominent American authorities in favour of the Depository system adopted in this Province. In the *Journal of Education* for June, 1867, will be found regulations similar in effect to those in this Province, which have been adopted in Michigan, Maryland, Nova Scotia and Australia.

We will now quote the following extracts from the Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Michigan on this subject. He says (after speaking of some other difficulties in carrying out their library system):

"But a worse evil grew up in the systematic plans of pedlers to palm upon the libraries a mass of cheap, trashy and often pernicious literature. One or two wealthy booksellers kept their pedling agents traversing the State, and many are the tricks by which they boasted that they cajoled the Inspectors. A few libraries were well selected and well kept; but so valueless for the public good, and especially for the education of the young, had the great majority become, that all intelligent friends of education desired a change." See an illustration of the existence of this pernicious system of peddling in our Province, given in the *Globe's* Book Trade Review for 1862.*

These "wealthy" and other "booksellers" here mentioned were determined, however, not to permit their "trade" to be interfered with by State authority, and their next course of action in the interest of the "trade" may be best gathered from the following notice, which the State Superintendent found it necessary to issue to the Schools:—

"Caution.—School Officers are especially cautioned against travelling book pedlers, who pretending to be agents of the State contractors, or asserting that they will sell cheaper than the contract prices, palm on to the libraries inferior and cheap editions of the works selected, or of worthless books in their places, and in common and frail bindings.

"Every book on this list is contracted for at considerably less than the publisher's retail price for the same in common binding, while the binding provided for by the contract is much more expensive, as well as durable binding, than ordinary cloth or even sheep binding.

"No book pedler can furnish these books in equally good editions, and in equal binding, for the prices given in this circular.

* * * * * *

"It is hoped that this simple and easy method of supplying the libraries with books will commend itself to the good sense of the people, and will induce a more liberal support of these valuable agencies of popular education. It would be difficult to devise a more simple plan. It is like bringing a large bookstore home to each district. A large list of good books—more than twice as large as any book store in the State can show—has been selected, with the aid of some of the best men in the State.

* * * * * * *

"All orders for books and stationery must be sent to the State Superintendent through the Secretary of the Board of School Commissioners, the Secretary keeping an account of the same," &c.

C. S. Stebbins, Esq., in his *Educational Needs of Michigan*, published in 1869, says: "The founders of our School system thought libraries indispensable to furnish reading to

* In the *Globe* Newspaper "Trade Review" for 1862, the writer states that "for years the country has been flooded with the lowest and most trashy class of literature from the American press. Books whose only merit was their bulk and binding, have been hawked into every nook of the Province by a migratory tribe of itinerant pedlers."

the young. *We do not need them now so much to furnish reading* as to secure the *proper kind* of reading. This, our present law, would do but for *one fatal defect*—a defect as fatal as would be the omission of the connecting rod in a locomotive. * * * And what kind of books were they? Some good ones, doubtless; but generally it were better to sow oats in the dust that covered them than to give them to the young to read. Every year, soon after the taxes were collected, the State swarmed with pedlers with all the unsaleable books of Eastern houses—the sensational novels of all ages, tales of piracies, murders and love intrigues—the yellow-covered literature of the world."

In the State of New York the library system has, under the pernicious efforts of itinerant vendors, as just pointed out, greatly declined. The New York *Teacher* thus gives some of the reasons for this decline:

"The Trustees refuse to be troubled with the care of the library, thus consigning it to an unfavourable location in the Section, and often hide it in some dark corner of the garret, or stow it into some out-buildings where its only visitors are rats, mice and spiders, They exercise a low and pernicious taste in the selection of books. *Dark and bloody tales of war and bloodshed, the silly catch-penny publications of unprincipled publishers, and the dry, uninstructive matter of some cheap old book,* usurp the place of the instructive, the elevating, the refining, the progressive issues of reputable publishing houses. They seem to regard it as a great evil that they cannot divert this sacred fund from its appropriate channel. Almost daily applications are made to the State Superintendent for permission to apply the library money to the payment of Teachers' wages, and that, too, when the Section is destitute of many useful items of apparatus; sometimes even of a globe and black board."

(7) Steps Taken by the Education Department for Ontario to Supply our Schools with Cheap and Useful Books, Maps and Apparatus, &c.

It now remains for us to state what are the steps which have been taken by the Ontario Department to supply the Schools with prize and library books, maps and apparatus. In 1850 and 1851, I went to England and the United States, and made special and advantageous arrangements with publishers there to furnish the Department with such books, &c., as might be required, at the lowest rates. These arrangements have been revised from time to time. The last revision was made in 1867, when the Deputy Superintendent was authorized to proceed to England to confer with the leading publishers personally on the subject, which he did, and made arrangements with about fifty publishers. From his Report to me on the result of his mission, I make the following extracts. He says: "Upon enquiry I found that none of our old publishers were disposed to offer better terms than I had been enabled to make with them some years ago. The new publishers, too, were as little disposed as the old ones to offer more than the usual trade terms to exporters. With several of the publishers I had some little difficulty, when I first called, to induce them to modify their terms. They alleged that they had already given us their best export terms for cash. After sundry conferences and explanations, they were at length induced, with two or three exceptions, to agree to an additional discount for cash of 2½, 5, 7½, or 10 per cent. (as the case might be) over and above their former rates of discount to the Department. Five per cent. was the average additional discount which I was thus enabled to secure for the Department, together with the advantage, in most cases, as heretofore, of the odd books, viz.:—7 as 6½, 13 as 12, 25 as 24. This additional discount will be quite sufficient to pay the customs duty which has recently been imposed upon books coming into the Province, and thus enable the Department to supply the Schools with a very greatly increased variety of books as the old rate, viz.: on an average currency for sterling prices (*i. e.* 20 cents for the shilling sterling.)"

These arrangements for the purchase of books, &c., having been explained to the Committee of the House of Assembly, appointed to enquire into the matter, together with the terms on which the books are supplied to the Schools, the Committee reported to the House upon the facts as follows:

"Your Committee have also made a thorough investigation of the Depository department, and find that the existing arrangements for purchasing stock *are satisfactory and well fitted for securing the same on the most favourable terms. The mode of disposing of the books is equally satisfactory.*"

PART II.

COPY OF CIRCULAR

SENT TO VARIOUS EDUCATIONISTS, WITH A VIEW TO ELICIT THEIR VIEWS ON THE DEPOSITORY QUESTION, WITH AN EXPLANATORY STATEMENT OF THE CASE.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit the following matter to your kind consideration, and will thank you to aid this Department with the best advice which (in the interest of the Schools,) you may be able to give in the mattter.

I may briefly state that the policy of supplying the 5,000 Public and High Schools connected with this Department with Library and Prize Books, Maps and Apparatus from the Depository of the Department, having been questioned, the Chief Superintendent of Education for this Province is desirous of obtaining the views of experienced Educationists on the subject. With that view, he sends herewith a statement of the principles upon which these Books, Maps and Apparatus are supplied by the Department to the Schools receiving Legislative aid, together with other information on the subject. He will thank you, (after the perusal of these papers,) to give him the benefit of your observation, and the results of your own experience on this matter, with a view to submit them to the Executive Government and to the Legislature.

A summary of the objections urged against the Depository, and of the replies to them, will be found on the fourth page of this circular.

Please address your reply to the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Education for Ontario, Toronto.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
(*Signed*) J. GEORGE HODGINS,
Deputy Superintendent.

Education Office,
Toronto, 15th April, 1873.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR THE SUPPLY OF LIBRARY AND PRIZE BOOKS, MAPS AND APPARATUS, TO THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO.

"The Public School Libraries are becoming the crown and glory of the institutions of the Province."—*Lord Elgin.*

"Had I the power, I would scatter Libraries over the whole land, as the sower sows his seed."—*Horace Mann.*

1. The Chief Superintendent of Education will add one hundred per cent. (out of the Legislative grant) to any sum or sums, not less than five dollars, transmitted to the Department by the Municipal and School Corporations, on behalf of Public and High Schools, and forward Public Library Books, Prize Books, Maps, Apparatus, Charts and Diagrams, to the value of the amount thus augmented, upon receiving a list of the articles required. In all cases, it will be necessary for any person acting on behalf of the Municipal or Trustee Corporation, to enclose or present a written authority to do so, verified by the corporate seal of the Corporation. A selection of Maps, Apparatus, Library and Prize Books, &c., to be sent, can always be made by the Department when so desired.

2. Catalogues and forms of Application will be furnished to School authorities on their application.

3. If Library and Prize Books be ordered, in addition to Maps and Apparatus, it will be necessary for the Trustees to send not less than five dollars additional for each class of books, &c., with the proper forms of application for each class.

4. The one hundred per cent. will be allowed on any sum over ten dollars, and a mixed selection from each of the three classes of articles, viz. : (1) maps and apparatus, (2) library, and (3) prize books will be sent ; but for $5 received only one class of articles can be sent.

5. In cases where the Books ordered are not in stock, the Department selects and sends others of a like character, subject, however, to the approval of the Trustees, etc. If any errors be discovered, they should be notified at once, and the invoice returned, in order that the errors may be rectified. Should additional Books be required, directions should be given as to the mode of their transmission.

6. In order to prevent the introduction of improper books into the Libraries, it is required that no book shall be admitted into any Free School Library established under these regulations which is not included in the authorized list of Public School Library Books.

Four kinds of Free Libraries may be established under the Regulations.

Under the regulations of the Department, each Municipal Council can establish *four classes* of libraries in the Municipality, as follows : City, Town, Village, and Township Councils can establish the first three classes, and School Trustees either of the first or third classes.

1. An ordinary *Free Public (or High) School Library* in each School-house for the use of the children and ratepayers.

2. A *General Free Public Lending Library*, available to all the ratepayers of the Municipality.

3. A *Professional Library* of books on teaching, school organization, language and kindred subjects, available to teachers alone.

4. A Library in any *Public Institution*, under control of the Municipality, for the use of the inmates, or in the *County Jail* for the use of the prisoners.

We cannot too strongly urge upon School Trustees the importance and even necessity of providing (especially during the autumn and winter months), suitable reading books for the pupils in their schools, either as prizes or in Libraries. Having given the pupils a taste for reading and general knowledge, they should provide some agreeable and practical means of gratifying it.

Professional Books supplied to School Inspectors, Teachers and Institutions.

1. In the catalogue are given the net prices at which books and school requisites may be obtained by the Public Educational Institutions of Ontario, from the Depository in connection with the Department.

2. Inspectors and teachers will also be supplied, on the same terms, with such educational works as relate to the duties of their profession.

Lord Elgin's explanation of the Regulations of the Department for selecting Library and Prize Books for the Schools.

To the foregoing regulations of the Department we desire to add the following explanation of the regulations on this subject, in the words of the late lamented Earl of Elgin, who was Governor-General of Canada, during the whole period of the establishment and maturing of the Normal and Library branches of the School system, who familiarized himself with the working of that system, and aided on every possible occasion in its development. On his resigning the Government of Canada, Lord Elgin prepared and presented to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, an elaborate report of his Canadian administration.

In that report, he devotes several pages to a comprehensive view of our School system, including a minute account of the system of public libraries, and the general machinery and administration of the school law and its results. * * * After adverting to the comparative state of education in Upper Canada in the years from 1847 to 1853 inclusive, Lord Elgin proceeds as follows :—

"In the former of these years, the Normal School, which may be considered as the foundation of the system, was instituted, and at the close of the latter, the first volume issued from the Education Department to the public school libraries, which are its crown and completion. If it may be affirmed of reciprocity with the United States, that it introduces an era in the commercial history of the Province; so may it, I think, be said of the latter measure, that it introduces a new era in its educational and intellectual history. The subject is so important that I beg leave to say a few words upon it. The term school libraries does not imply that the libraries in question are specially designed for the benefit of the school pupils. They are, in point of fact, free public libraries intended for the use of the general population; and they are entitled school libraries, because their establishment has been provided for in the School Acts, and their management confided to the school authorities.

"Public school libraries then, similar to those which are now being introduced into Canada, have been in operation for several years in some States of the neighbouring Union, and many of the most valuable features of the Canadian system have been borrowed from them. In most of the States, however, which have appropriated funds for library purposes, the selection of books has been left to the trustees appointed by the different districts, many of whom are ill qualified for the task, and the consequence has been that the travelling peddlers, who offer the most showy books at the lowest prices, have had the principal share in furnishing the libraries. In introducing the system into Canada, precautions have been taken, which, I trust, will have the effect of obviating this great evil.

"In the School Act of 1850, which first set apart a sum of money for the establishment and support of school libraries, it is declared to be the duty of the Chief Superintendent of Education to apportion the sum granted for this purpose by the Legislature under the following condition :—'That no aid shall be given towards the establishment and support of any school library, unless an equal amount be contributed or expended from local sources for the same object;' and the Council of Public Instruction is required to examine, and at its discretion to recommend or disapprove of text books for the use of schools, or books for school libraries. 'Provided that no portion of the legislative school grant shall be applied in aid of any school in which any book is used which has been disapproved of by the Council, and public notice given of such disapproval.'

"The Council of Public Instruction, in the discharge of the responsibility thus imposed upon it, has adopted, among the general regulations for the establishment and management of public school libraries in Upper Canada, the following rule :—'In order to prevent the introduction of improper books into libraries, it is required that no book shall be admitted into any public school library, established under these regulations, which is not included in the catalogue of public school library books prepared according to law;' and the principles by which it has been guided in performing the task of selecting books for these libraries, are stated in the following extract from the minutes of its proceedings :—

"'The Council regards it as imperative that no work of a licentious, vicious, or immoral tendency, and no works hostile to the Christian religion, should be admitted into the libraries.*

"'2. Nor is it, in the opinion of the Council, compatible with the objects of the public school libraries, to introduce into them controversial works on theology, or works of denominational controversy; although it would not be desirable to exclude all historical and other works in which such topics are referred to and discussed, and it is desirable to include a selection of suitable works on the evidences of natural and revealed religion.

"'3. In regard to works on ecclesiastical history, the Council agrees on a selection of the most approved works on each side.

* The first and part of the second of these paragraphs have been adopted verbatim in the new School Law and Regulations of New Brunswick relating to public libraries.

"'4. With these exceptions, and within these limitations, it is the opinion of the Council that as wide a selection as possible should be made of useful and entertaining books of permanent value, adapted to popular reading in the various departments of human knowledge; leaving each municipality to consult its own taste, and exercise its own discretion in selecting such books from the general catalogue.

"'5. The including of any books in the general catalogue is not to be understood as the expression of any opinion by the Council in regard to any sentiments inculcated or combated in such books; but merely as an acquiescence on the part of the Council in the purchase of such by any municipality, should it think proper to do so.

"'6. The general catalogue of books for public school libraries may be modified and enlarged from year to year as circumstances may suggest, and as suitable new works of value may appear.'

"The catalogue above referred to affords ample proof of the intelligence and liberal spirit in which the principles above stated have been carried out by the Council of Public Instruction. The Chief Superintendent observes, that in the case of libraries established up to the present time, the local authorities have, in a large number of instances, assigned the task of selecting books to the Chief Superintendent; that in some they have, by a committee of one or more of themselves, chosen all the books desired by them; and that in others they have selected them to the amount of their own appropriation, requesting the Chief Superintendent to choose the remainder to the amount of the apportionment of the library grant."

Summary of Objections to the Educational Depository.

The principal objections urged by Booksellers against the Depository are—

1st. That it is an unjust interference with "the trade."

2nd. That it creates a "monopoly" injurious to them.

3rd. That if the Legislature supplies its schools with books and maps, it ought, on the same principle, to supply other articles.

4th. That, even if the arrangement was a wise one in the infancy of the school system, when Booksellers were few, and facilities of supply did not exist, it is indefensible now, when these reasons for its establishment no longer exist.

5th. That if "the trade" can (as it does) supply text books, it can also equally well supply library and prize books.

6th. That the Depository is an expensive burthen to the Province.

Reply to these Objections.

Although it is difficult to condense replies to general objections like the foregoing, yet we endeavour to do so, as follows:—

1st. That the alleged interference of the Depository with the book trade is the reverse of truth, as the "Trade Returns" will show. It has, on the contrary, largely developed this trade, by sending books into every corner of the land. The value of books (not maps and apparatus) imported into the Province of Ontario in 1850, was $141,700, and now about $410,000, while the average import of books by the Department *has not been ten per cent. of this latter sum.*

2nd. That the Educational Depository exists solely for, and in the interests of the schools alone, and that it has never supplied private parties with books, or interfered with private trade in any way; and that to abandon the principle of the Educational Depository would be either to confer a "monopoly" of high prices upon a few individual Booksellers, or to throw wide open the door to the introduction of all kinds of literature, the bad and pernicious as well as the good, as can be demonstrated by incontrovertible testimony and examples.*

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* Note.—Four Reasons why "the Trade" is incompetent to take the place of the Depository in Supplying our Schools.

3rd. That the principle of the Depository is recognized and acted upon without question by the Imperial, Dominion and Provincial Governments, in their Stationery Offices, Queen's Printers, Post-Offices, Army and Navy Supply, etc.

4th. That if the Government, under the authority of the Legislature, has a right to give money and provide trained teachers for the schools, it has also a right to give books and maps to them, and there is not a shadow of difference in the principle of the one gift and the other.

5th. That the entire text-book trade is in the hands of the Booksellers, as the books are all named and known, and no departure from the list can take place; but that with the large and constant influx of new books, no such supervision could take place over the supply by Booksellers of prizes and library books.

6th. That the Depository has fully paid its own way, and has not cost the Province one cent for its management for twenty years.

PART III.

1. American Replies to the foregoing Circular.

The Honourable John G. Baird, Assistant-Secretary, Board of Education, State of Connecticut:—A law was passed by the Legislature of Connecticut in 1856, by which any School district in the State, by raising $10 for the purchase of "Library and Apparatus," could receive from the State Treasury $10 more for the same purpose: also, by raising $5 any subsequent year, could receive $5 from the State. This law has since been modified, so that districts having more than 100 pupils in actual attendance can draw *multiple* appropriations. The present law on this point is given in Section 96 of the School Law of Connecticut, as revised and re-enacted in 1872. Under the "School Library Law" a large number of districts every year receive the State appropriation. The amount drawn from the State Treasury in this way during the year ending March 31st, 1873, was $2,960. The Annual Reports of this Department from 1857 to the present time (except the Report for 1867) have contained a statement of what has been done each year. The money thus obtained is usually expended in procuring maps, globes, dictionaries, Gazetteers, and other works of reference. Occasionally a library of books for reading and circulation is established and maintained by annually drawing the State appropriation. There has been no complaint among booksellers, so far as I am aware, on the ground that this action of the State interferes with their business. The amount expended for "Libraries and Apparatus" has never yet equalled $10,000 in any one year. No large part of this amount can be considered as so much taken from the trade of any one bookseller; in fact, the loss of trade to that class of people is practically *nil*, for those who procure maps, etc., would have bought *nothing*, (usually,) except for the offer of State aid. In some cases the trade of booksellers is positively *increased*. The *second* objection named in your circular can have very little weight. The monopoly is too small in its proportions to trouble any bookseller, or to profit essentially those who hold it. The *third* objection assumes that the *State* does the principal part. But the practical workings in Connecti-

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To the statement that private booksellers can supply the library wants of the schools as well, or nearly as well, as the Education Department, our reply is four-fold:—

1st. That a Department, specially charged with the care and oversight of the schools, being a disinterested party, must be much better qualified to minister to their wants in these respects than interested parties, who, as a rule, have no other object in view than commercial gain.

2nd. That the experience of educationists on this subject is, that booksellers, through their agents and travellers throughout the rural parts, have, with some good books, disposed of immense quantities of pernicious and worthless books.

3rd. That if the right of supply is thrown open to booksellers indiscriminately, the bad as well as the good will take advantage of the facilities thus afforded for flooding the country with their own publications without check or restraint. To restrict the right of supply to one or more publishers would be to perpetuate the so-called "monopoly" in its most oppressive and offensive form. If a change be made at all, it must be in the direction of throwing open the right of supply, and giving all vendors alike full permission to circulate such books as they please—bad as well as good.

4th. No private publishing house, even in the cities, could, without having the "monopoly" of supply secured to it, be able to keep more than one-half of the variety of books, maps, charts and apparatus, which would be necessary for circulation in our 5,000 schools. Nor could it supply them at the low prices at which they are now furnished to the trustees.

cut show that those who *receive* the bounty raise *for themselves* several times as much. They are encouraged to *help themselves*. The *fourth* objection has no application in this State. As for the *fifth*, the booksellers *do* supply a considerable part of the books. The *sixth* does not apply here; the State pays a few hundred dollars each year, but so small a sum it would be absurd to call a "burden." The plan in force here *works well*, and no one finds any fault with it.

The Honourable H. A. M. Henderson, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Kentucky:—I have not time to elaborate my views. Kentucky has only made one experiment in the direction you indicate, namely, in the purchase of one copy of Collins' History of Kentucky for each School district, at $4 each. This will cost the State School Fund $25,000, and, in my opinion, be barren of all profitable results to Common Schools. I opposed this scheme. It might have been well for the State to pay this sum out of the general revenue, to encourage the publication of so full and entertaining a history of the Commonwealth, but the School Fund should not have borne this burden. It would have been much better to have expended this amount in supplying Schools with maps, charts, and other instructional aids. For my own State, with my observations of how the School funds of the Southern States have been squandered by venal contracts, and in need of all the money we can command to pay teachers, I should oppose any proposition to expend public moneys belonging to the School endowments, or derived from taxation in aid of Common Schools, in the purchase of Maps, Charts, etc. My observation of College and School libraries is that they are well nigh profitless appendages, so far as the pupils are concerned. Reference books are of course valuable to teachers and professors. A child currently engaged in the study of text books has but little time to devote to general reading. Its mind is not well enough disciplined for solid reading, and books of mere entertainment are well nigh worthless. Much reading, without corresponding thought, superinduces a morbid habit, and affords a shallow apology for the intellect to remain as inert as a honeycomb, while an author's reflections are *poured* into its empty cells. Of the two, I would purchase maps, charts, cubes, etc., *before* books. My opinion is not in favour of the Merit Card system. Studying for any other prize than the inherent worth of learning depraves the ambition of a child. The pupil should study for self-conquest, and not for triumph over its companions and fellow-students. Give each pupil grade according to attainments, but not in the way of rewards. Religion and Education are both suffering from the prize system. The motive offered to aspiration is low and demoralizing, and the results are self-conceit, jealousy and heartburnings. The teacher should strive to inspire his pupils with love of learning, and not desire for public commendation and prizes.

The Honourable H. B. Wilson, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Minnesota:—I have carefully examined your "circulars" in respect to the scheme of distributing "Library books, Maps, Charts, Apparatus," etc., and think it a most admirable one. For economy, convenience and general utility, I cannot see how a better plan could be devised. Our State is young in years, our system not yet fully matured, and as yet our law has made no provision for public district libraries; but we are looking forward to the time for their establishment in every district throughout the State. There is nothing, in my judgment, that will conduce more to the prosperity and general intelligence of any people, than the placing within the reach of all classes of a community a well-selected library. Your plan for accomplishing this end seems a most excellent one.

The Honourable Abram B. Weaver, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of New York:—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular soliciting my opinion in regard to the policy of supplying the Public Schools with apparatus and library books from a Government depository. The testimony of School Commissioners and of others interested in the cause of education is, that one of the greatest defects of the district library system of this State is the manner in which the books are selected. They are purchased by the School district trustees, and generally at the highest market price. In many cases the trustees are men who are unfamiliar with books, and who do not know what to select. The consequence is that books find their way into the libraries which ought not to be there, and which, if not positively bad, are not useful and instructive. The library funds are also wasted, to a certain extent, by paying for the books the highest retail price. These defects would certainly be remedied under a system such as that which obtains in the Province of Ontario. In my judgment,

such a system, honestly administered, is better than any other which has fallen under my notice.

Rev. Samuel C. Jackson, Secretary, State Board of Education, Massachusetts:—Your School system and that of Massachusetts, in relation to the matter above mentioned, are so different that we really can give no advice of any value. We have no "observation" or "experience on this matter." We have no public or high school libraries, except such as are provided by local, individual and voluntary contribution. Our law authorizes the school committees of the several municipalities to expend 25 per cent. of their share of the income of the State school fund. This they do on their own judgment, and in their own way, responsible only to their constituents. With this exception, there is no "legislative aid" given for procuring Library and Prize Books, Maps, Charts, Tablets, &c., &c. These are furnished by local taxation or voluntary donation, independent of state aid, except as I have said, 25 per cent. of what is received from the school fund. may be used for purchasing "Apparatus, Books of reference, Charts, Maps, &c.," at the discretion of the School Committee of each town or city.

The Honourable Alonzo Abernethy, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Iowa:—I have the honour to reply to your very courteous request for a statement of the results of my observation and experience, and of my views upon the scheme submitted to procure Books, Maps and Apparatus for the use of the Public Schools of your Province. that in the absence of laws making provisions for these very useful and necessary aids to instruction in my own State, our Schools are, as yet, without any adequate supply of Libraries, Maps and Apparatus. In my judgment, if your system of furnishing the supplies is judiciously carried out, it will produce the following results : 1. The Schools will be better than they otherwise would be ; 2. The supplies furnished will, as a general rule, be of better quality ; 3. The expense will be greatly reduced, in proportion to the amount purchased. Since the scheme is for the public welfare, the objection that it interferes with the trade is not valid.

The Honourable Jno. M. Fleming, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Tennessee.—The circular letter issued from your office and requesting my views touching the advantages or disadvantages of your "Depository" Scheme, as set forth in the accompanying document, has just reached the office. It would afford me much pleasure to offer any suggestions or opinions that could be of value to you, or the interests you represent ; but inasmuch as any opinions I might express will lack the sanction of "observation and experience," they can hardly be deemed worthy of notice. In Tennessee we have as yet no School system organized. Only since last March have we had a law authorizing State organization. Under the new law, we are now endeavouring to set an elementary system in operation, with very fair prospects of ultimate success. I regret that I can render you no service, and offer you my best wishes for the continued advancement of the educational interests of your Province.

The Honourable J. W. Simonds, Superintendent of Public Instruction, New Hampshire.—I heartily approve of the plan, and have commended a similar plan for our State to aid the Free schools. My views were given in my last report, as follows :—

Inquiry 1.—Are the public schools of your town supplied with a large dictionary ? Are your schools furnished with outline or wall maps ? Globes ? Are they well supplied with blackboards ? If schools are not thus furnished, what means do you recommend to supply them ?

A careful estimate shows that scarcely two per cent. of the Public Schools in the state are supplied with an appropriate dictionary of the language for use of the teacher and scholars. Not one per cent. of the Schools have globes for illustrating the important study of geography. About one and one-half per cent. of the schools possess outline or wall maps. It appears that eighty schools in every one hundred are not properly furnished with a sufficient amount of blackboard surface.

This estimate has been based upon the number of Schools last year, twenty-five hundred in even figures. Such facts may appear startling in this time of improvement, when even the more ordinary labours of life are relieved of tedious toil by the aid of improved implements. The same good sense should obtain in the School-room as in the workshop. Parents are not indifferent to the wants of their children. They are interested in their growth and education. They toil hard to supply their wants. They alone can rejoice when the child learns and ad-

vances. I believe they would only be too glad to cover a circuit of the walls of the entire School-room with blackboards, whenever an intelligent Teacher or School Committee would ask it, and at the same time explain the utility and necessity of the blackboard. Every School-room should contain that amount of blackboard, so placed that the primer class can reach it, and then the Teacher and scholars should daily use the board. Good Teachers may be restricted in supply of text-books, but allow a liberal share of blackboard, then the fertile inventiveness of their minds will readily make up for the scarcity of books. Stint them in the supply of blackboard and the resources and wealth of mind are obstructed.

Every parent has observed, in watching the earliest manifestations of intelligence in the son or daughter, that the larger amount of the child's knowledge acquired during the first twelve years was obtained through the channels of the five senses. Later the child compares, reasons, reflects. Our system of education has been somewhat abnormal. Abstract ideas have been offered the young mind; abstract sciences have been pressed upon his attention; in fact, abstraction has confused and disgusted. An illiterate labourer would usually adopt the true normal method of communicating intellegence by either marking upon the ground, crossing his fingers, or adopting some other natural means of illustration. Nature's method of teaching would be a safe guide. The Teacher should illustrate the various ideas and principles taught by lines and figures upon the board. The pupils should work out upon the board the problems of each branch. Thus when the pupil shall leave the School for the work of life, he will not be pained to feel vividly that his schooling has been mechanical, and realize that he must unlearn many habits of thought inconsistent with the practice of life, but will rejoice that he has learned those facts that he will use in life.

There can be no question with reference to the need of globes and outline maps for use in the common Schools. A skilful Teacher can represent the maps by drawings upon the board and substitute some spherical body for a globe. The sight of the genuine articles would awaken more interest and enthusiasm with the pupils. The expense of a globe and maps is moderate at the present time with the improved means of manufacturing them. With the dictionary it is different. That, like the blackboard, is an indispensable article, and cannot be represented with crayon. Our language is furnished with two large illustrated dictionaries of unsurpassed excellence. The inconsistency of placing a young man or young lady in a primary School without a dictionary of the language is too apparent.

Every School-room should be furnished with Maps, Globe and a Dictionary, *all* answer. The problem for solution is, "how supply them?" Various answers have been received. One Teacher of a long and successful experience says, "awaken a more general and deeper interest in the importance of our Schools and the necessity of providing Teachers with tools to work with. This can be done through the earnest effort of our Teachers and other friends of education." Another says the "districts should be obliged to furnish such articles." Another, "raise the money by exhibitions, lectures and levies." Mr. L. Clark of Lancaster recommends the appropriation of a limited per cent. of School money for the purchase of apparatus, under the direction of the Superintending School Committee, in the same manner as a certain per cent. can be applied by the Prudential Committee for repairs. The fact is, this illustrated apparatus is wanted to-day. Seventy thousand boys and girls in our Schools ask for it. The times demand it. The supply should be forthcoming from some source. In this, the State, town and district have a common interest.

An illustrated dictionary, a set of outline maps and a globe, appropriate for a Primary School, can be purchased for twenty-five dollars. A good Grammar School set of maps, globe and dictionary would cost double that sum. No doubt the parents in many School districts would contribute the means to furnish a supply, if the matter should be presented to their generosity. In other localities, and where the wants of the School are more deserving, the means is limited.

Plan. It is here proposed that a positive assurance shall be held out by the State to encourage parents and districts to provide their Schools with a certain amount of necessary illustrated apparatus. Let a Law be enacted, that, whenever an individual or district will furnish to proper State officials, a sum of money, within limited specifications, for the purchase of apparatus for the Public Schools, stating the articles already possessed, if any, and those desired, the State by its officer will add an equal sum, purchase and forward the articles. In this way many districts will be aided, and others stimulated to action. By adopting this system of purchase, good articles can be supplied at a moderate expense. This is not an

untried project. The Parliament of Canada West adopted a similar plan in 1851 for supplying the Schools with School books, maps and apparatus, also Public School Libraries with books. The following table shows the value of articles sent out from the Educational Depository in Ontario during the years 1851 to 1871, inclusive :—

YEAR.	Articles on which the 100 per cent. has been apportioned from the Legislative Grant.		Articles sold at Catalogue prices without any apportionment from the Legislative Grant.	Total value of Library, Prize and School Books, Maps and Apparatus despatched.
	Public School Library Books.	Maps, Apparatus and Prize Books.		
1851	.....	.....	$1,414	$1,414
1852	.....	.....	2,981	2,981
1853	.....	.....	4,233	4,233
1854	$51,376	.....	5,514	56,890
1855	9,947	$4,655	4,389	18,991
1856	7,205	9,320	5,726	22,251
1857	16,200	18,118	6,452	40,770
1858	3,982	11,810	6,972	22,764
1859	5,805	11,905	6,679	24,389
1860	5,289	16,832	5,416	27,537
1861	4,084	16,251	4,894	25,229
1862	3,273	16,194	4,844	24,311
1863	4,022	15,887	3,461	23,370
1864	1,931	17,260	4,454	23,645
1865	2,400	20,224	3,818	26,442
1866	4,375	27,114	4,172	35,661
1867	3,404	28,270	7,419	39,093
1868	4,420	25,923	4,793	35,136
1869	4,655	24,475	5,678	34,808
1870	3,396	28,810	6,175	38,381
1871	3,300	30,076	8,138	41,514

During 1871 there were sent out Maps of the World, 184; of Europe, 276; of Asia, 239; of Africa, 207; of America, 252; of British North America and Canada, 323; of Great Britain and Ireland, 181; of single hemispheres, 216; of Scriptural and Classical, 144; of other charts and maps, 447; of globes, 123; of sets of apparatus, 43; of other pieces of School apparatus, 446; of historical and other lessons, in sheets, 13,055. Number of volumes of prize books, 60,420. The entire cost of same was $30,076, the Province contributing one half, or $15,000.

The Honourable Norton Bateman, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Illinois. I have had the honour to receive, from the Department of Public Instruction for Ontario certain printed documents concerning the policy pursued in that Province with reference to supplying the Public and High Schools connected with the Department, with library and prize books, etc. In compliance with the request contained in the printed letter of the Deputy Superintendent, prefixed to one of said documents, I have the pleasure to remark: 1. I consider the dissemination of good books among the people, as a practical and powerful means of promoting the public intelligence and virtue. 2. I consider it as within the proper and legitimate province of the General Assembly, in devising a system of popular education, to recognize and provide for the establishment and maintenance of School libraries, as an important and useful adjunct of every such system of public instruction. 3. I consider it of paramount importance that all books of a licentious, vicious or demoralizing character or tending so, should be excluded from such libraries, and to that end, I think that adequate discretionary authority should be vested in the proper administration to see that no vile or impure book is allowed to have, or retain a place in any such library; and that the watchful exercise of such authority should be enjoined as a grave official duty. 4. It seems well for assistance in the establishment and maintenance of such libraries to be furnished from the general revenues of the State. In very many cases the limited

means of the districts prevent the entering upon such an undertaking; and the general adoption of the plan would be greatly facilitated by and from the government. The money thus expended, would be the most serviceable of any of its disbursements. 5. As the state becomes more largely interested than any town or district, it is eminently proper that state supervision should be exercised over the lists of books for which its money is expended; and the supervision may well be extended so as to ensure an economical expenditure of the funds, as well as to secure books that are worth reading. 6. To the objections from the "trade," I assign but little weight; and unless the expense of carrying on the depository is greater than the difference of prices at which books are furnished to the depository by the publishers, and the average prices at which the Districts could buy, the maintenance of the depository is of advantage to the people of the Province. The state undertaking to secure the education of the people, it is proper to adopt such courses as will lead to the maximum results with the means employed. The state does not undertake to prop up the different trades. But as far as the book trade is concerned, I should consider the scheme a help to it rather than a hindrance. The general prevalence of a taste for reading that must result from the fostering care of the libraries, as given by the state, cannot be but increased. The liability to abuse presents itself to my mind as the greatest objection to the plan. The above indicates my views of the principles involved. The details of the *Plan* submitted are not familiar enough to me, to warrant my passing an opinion upon its merits. In Illinois State, aid has not been directly given to the formation of district libraries. A tax may be levied by the directors, and surplus funds of the districts may be used for the purchase of books for libraries. The results have not been altogether satisfactory, but it is believed that the idea of the libraries is correct, and that the failure in securing desirable results must be attributed to some deficiency in the adjustment of the plan. Whether the precise scheme adopted in the Province of Ontario, would be suitable in this state, or in any one of the United States, I am not prepared to say, but it may be doubted. It strikes me that there are some reasons for thinking that it would encounter obstacles here, that it does not in your case.

The Honourable H. D. McCarty, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Kansas. Please accept my reply to your request for my experience and opinion in regard to an Educational Depository, which is briefly as follows:—

1. Having had no experience as to the working of an Educational Depository connected with the Department of Public Instruction, in this or any other state, I consider my judgment in this connection valueless.

2. As a matter of policy, and incentive to individual exertion on the part of Schools to secure apparatus and library books, I heartily commend the system.

3. I heartily endorse the plan of furnishing under the regulations named, all the articles mentioned in the list, except prize books, and merit cards used as gifts, as I am satisfied from observation and experience that prizes given as an incentive in Schools, work not only a negative good but a positive injury.

The Honourable W. M. Bryant, City Superintendent of Public Schools, Burlington:— I have to say that I have no experience in the management of libraries on any such plan as the one adopted by you; but the consideration I have been able to give the subject has left me a very deep impression of the excellence and practicability of the plan you have determined upon. The reasons assigned in justification of its adoption appear to me thoroughly convincing; and even the single one of securing the distribution of the best, and *only* the best, literature would of itself, and though wholly unsupported by the other reasons adduced, be quite unanswerable. We have in our State (Iowa) a law authorizing the people of each School district to vote a tax for the support of a Public School Library. I hope to see it made operative in this city during the coming year, and have only to regret that, for the sake of general security throughout the State against the inevitable legions of impudent vendors of literary trash, we have not in our law such a wise provision as that which you have secured in the interests of truth and purity in your Province of Ontario. As a rule, I am extremely sceptical respecting the good to be derived from the exercise of Legislative guardianship over the people; but the provisions you have secured are so liberal as to disarm any such objection. It is a guardianship which encourages and guides while it does not circumscribe enquiry, which fosters and stimulates and in no proper sense discourages intellectual acti-

vity. Your plan, once firmly established, can hardly fail of proving a happy precedent to be at length generally followed.

The Honourable Wm. R. Creery, City Superintendent of Public Instruction, Baltimore, Maryland.—Much business and absence from the city will account for my inattention to the request made by circular to this Department. My opinion of the subjects presented will be briefly stated. 1st. The Depository is one of the best education agencies that could be operated, and being conducted exclusively in the interests of the Schools, commends itself to my hearty approbation. 2nd. Our State Legislature and City governments frequently aid public institutions in the procurement of books, maps, charts, &c., and thus they increase facilities for public instruction. A large and improved map of the State of Maryland was furnished to the Public Schools of the whole State directly by the State Legislature. Baltimore City, of which I am Superintendent of Schools, received 120 copies of this map, worth $10 per copy. 3rd. I think your plan of distribution an excellent one. I wish we had the same arrangement for our Schools.

The Honourable J. N. Larned, City Superintendent of Education, Buffalo, N.Y.—In reply to the circular note from your office I would say that I have no knowledge of the working of the policy that you have adopted, in supplying library books, etc., from a Department Depository; but I have little doubt that it is more judicious and more satisfactory in result than the policy which we pursue in this State, of dividing by apportionment the money of the School Library Fund, and leaving it to be expended at will by local School authorities. I know that our School Library money is very far from being expended wisely always; that too much of it is wasted upon trashy and ephemeral books, which would, undoubtedly, be excluded from the catalogue of such a Depository as you maintain. No doubt, too, in the divided expenditure of the money, less is purchased with it than might be under your plan. There may be practical objections to a Depository policy of which I know nothing; but, judging only from an acquaintance with the working of the alternative policy, I should favour your system.

The Honourable E. B. Hale, City Superintendent of Public Schools, Cambridge, Mass.—The circular requesting my opinion of the policy of supplying schools with books and apparatus from the Depository of the Department is before me, and I have the honour to reply briefly: In the first place, I am obliged to confess that I have had no experience in this direction that would avail me in forming a judgment. In our own city, and, indeed, throughout this commonwealth, the principle of *local* taxation is the prevailing one, and the municipality depends but little upon the State for aid. To be sure there is a State School Fund divided between the various cities and towns, but the moiety which each received is very small. Cambridge, for instance, with an annual expenditure for school purposes of $250,000 draws from the State but $2,000, while the balance is raised by local taxation, and yet it seems to me that the system which you have adopted is a most excellent one. You properly lay a proportionate share of the burden directly upon the municipality, and, at the same time, furnish to School officers the means of furnishing their Schools with necessary appliances, and at the lowest possible prices. It seems to me that the objections, as stated in your circular, are not well taken, and that the replies are unanswerable. I should be glad if we had as good a system of which we could avail ourselves.

The Honourable Henry Kiddle, City Superintendent of Public Instruction, New York.—In reply to a communication from the Deputy-Superintendent, asking my views in relation to the mode at present in use, of supplying the Schools of Ontario with "Library and Prize Books, &c.," I would state, after a perusal of the documents sent, explaining the matter in detail, as well as the objections which have been urged against it, that I see no force in such objections, and consider the plan adopted a most judicious one, and well calculated to promote the object of providing the Schools with books and apparatus, as well as to foster a proper local interest and public spirit in relation to education. The plan of furnishing the Schools from a central office or depository has prevailed in this city for more than twenty years, and I have never known, during that entire period, that any objection has been brought against it. Our book list is comprehensive, containing some of the publications of all the principal publishers, and, therefore, the idea of its establishing a monopoly could not be entertained.

The Honourable S. A. Ellis, City Superintendent of Public Instruction, Rochester.—I have examined carefully the objections urged against your plan of rendering Government aid, in the supply of "Library and Prize Books, Maps, Apparatus, &c.," for the Public Schools of Ontario, and your reply thereto, and confess that your arguments seem to me unanswerable. As the objections seem to come from the "trade," allow me to say that, although for several years in the "trade" myself, I am unable to understand how any one, who prefers the welfare of society to his own personal ends, can raise a serious objection to a plan which must form so valuable an adjunct of the Public School system.

The Honourable A. P. Marble, City Inspector of Schools, Worcester, Mass.—Your system of distributing books and maps seems to me a most excellent one. In this city we have had no experience in precisely what you are doing; but we find in our own practice what confirms some parts of your plans. The School-office furnishes supplies for the city Schools at from 15 to 25 per cent. less than the cost of the same at the book-stores. The same can be done for a whole State or Province with still greater economy I should suppose. As you are aware the books for our Free Public Libraries are bought by the trustees. In your plan I see an encouragement for the small towns, and an aid in the selection of books which can but be beneficial. The subject of furnishing all children in our Public Schools text-books at the public charge has been agitated of late in Mass. Each town or city has now the privilege of so doing. I expect good results from this custom. The same principle is involved as in the furnishing of the books and maps for libraries. No money can be better expended for educational purposes than what you expend for the libraries.

The Honourable John Hancock, City Superintendent of Schools, Cincinnati.—I think your plan a most excellent one for the encouragement of culture among the people of your Province. I think also a similar plan would work great good for our rural School districts.

The Honourable A. J. Rickoff, City Superintendent of Instruction, Cleveland.—Eighteen years ago, I visited your Normal School at Toronto, and then became acquainted with the working of your Depository for the supply of maps, apparatus, &c., and I have to say that the impression then made upon my mind, and my thoughts since have been entirely favourable to the plan. I should very much like to see it adopted in this State, so far as pertains to the supply of maps and apparatus, were it not that the frequent changes of School officers would interfere with its judicious and efficient management. We have no public libraries, except in the larger Cities. The objections urged by book dealers are only such as might be expected from that quarter. Though the Depository seems to take the sale of books from the trade; yet, greatly facilitating as it does the diffusion of good reading matter, it cultivates a habit of reading on the part of great masses of people, and in this way really promotes the interests with which at first sight it seems to interfere. That the Depository can supply books cheaper than the trade would do, cannot be questioned; and that the selections made by its managers with a view simply to the interests of the Schools and of the people, is certainly a great advantage. I beg that you will send me a copy of your list of supplies and catalogue of books.

Isaac M. Wellington, Esq., Principal High School, Detroit. My observation and experience are entirely in favour of the plan of the Ontario Department in aid of Public Instruction. I know of no valid objection against said plan, can see no force in those urged against it —and can name no radical improvement in it.

O. R. Burchard, Esq., A.M., Editor and Publisher, "New York State Educational Journal," Buffalo, N. Y.—In reply to the subject matter of your circular I would say, that in my opinion the plan of furnishing necessary School apparatus of *all* kinds by the State Government, at the lowest possible price, is a good one, because of the *money saved*, of the uniformity of books which will be used, of the control over worthless and injurious books which is thus given, and of the more general use which will be made of all kinds of School-room apparatus under this system. In this State the influence of book-publishers over local use of books has many times been very injurious, and some of our States are now discussing State supervision of text-books for Schools. From the circular sent me I should say the "Educational Depository" is a good thing and might be continued.

D. M. Knickerbocker, Esq., Editor "American Educational Monthly," New York.—In reply to your favour I can only speak on general principles. The question seems to be,

How can books, maps, &c., best be supplied to the Schools? In what way can the best books be obtained at the cheapest rates? I see no surer way to get good books than to submit their selection to the care of a board of gentlemen fitted to judge and faithful to their duty. Such a board, I am assured, now passes judgment on your school-books. Nor can I see a cheaper way of procuring books than to buy in quantities, as you do, and sell to the schools at the lowest possible rates. Since these two advantages are obtained by the Board of Ontario, and since there are no apparent drawbacks in the matter of expense, the Depository paying its own way, I can see no reason for a change. The complaints of the trade should, it strikes me, not be regarded, since the question is purely one of utility for the Schools. If the trade can supply better and cheaper books than the Depository there may be some reasons for a change. I make these remarks with great diffidence since I am entirely ignorant of all the facts of the case.

Henry A. Ford, Esq., Editor and Publisher, "Michigan Teacher,"—I have your late circular, and reply at early convenience. After some examination of the "Objections to the Educational Depository," and the "Reply," I am compelled to think the former quite flimsy, and the latter thoroughly effective, in fact quite unanswerable. You are working an inestimable benefit to the Schools and educational officers of your Province, by removing their supplies, to some extent, from the tricks and extortions of "the trade," and their outcry is simply the old one, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Years ago, while acting as Superintendent of Education for one of our Counties, and before learning of your practice, I was accustomed to supply teachers and School-districts with professional books and apparatus at cost price; and there is no part of my work to which I recur with more satisfaction than to that. I commend your scheme without reservation, and would add the hope: *Esto perpetua.*

Thomas B. Stockwell, Esq., "Rhode Island Schoolmaster."—When your first circular, relative to libraries, &c., was received, our editor, Mr. Brickwell, had just sailed for Europe on a short trip. I, therefore, deemed it best to leave the matter for him to attend to on his return, as he has a much fuller knowledge of the facts bearing on the case than I possess. Judging from your second circular, however, that you are desirous of getting at some data as soon as possible, I have ventured to state one or two facts in connection with the question that may be of some value. When Hon. Henry Barnard was School Commissioner of our State, he organized, or caused to be organized, *free public* libraries in nearly every town in the State. In some of the towns they have been preserved, in others abandoned. In hardly any case have they been fostered and increased as they ought, or as one would have expected. A movement has been inaugurated by Mr. Brickwell, our present Commissioner, to provide for the establishment of these libraries. It has not yet, I believe, been fully organized, but will doubtless be so another winter. Of the general advantage and value of such a course as your circular explains, I think there can be no question, as it observes the golden mean between over-aiding on the one hand and utterly withholding on the other.

John A. Banfield, Esq., Editor "Kansas Educational Journal," Leavenworth, Kas.—In response to your inquiries, I cannot speak from experience. It seems to me, however, that you have fully answered the objections of "the trade," and I should think there could come no objections from other sources which would be worth responding to. By all means preserve the only guarantee you have of securing the introduction of "only wholesome" books into School libraries.

Superintendent, School Committee, Brunswick, Me.—I owe you an apology for not replying to your circular at an earlier date. The truth is, we have no experience here in Brunswick to guide me in making a reply. I am free to confess that I like your plan of an independent agency for the supply of library books, maps, &c., as it largely relieves School Committees from the unbecoming solicitations of the hosts of school book agents. More, it gives to Committees full control of the class of books to be furnished. In Maine we have trouble enough in deciding upon the text books to be used, and should we adopt the system in force in your Department, we should be overrun with applications from the booksellers.

I do not regard the five objections (1st to 5th) in the Summary of Objections to the Educational Depository, as having special weight.

2. Replies from New Brunswick and South Australia.

Theodore H. Rand, Esq., Chief Superintendent of Education, Province of New Brunswick.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication with enclosures. In reply :—1. The Board of Education of this Province, for many years, supplied text books and apparatus by means of county agencies. The Board owned the stock, and the agents were allowed 10 per cent. on the sales. The articles were sold to any person, in any quantity and at uniform prices. The object of the Board in establishing these agencies appears to have been to bring School materials within reach of the people, and at moderate prices. In several of the counties the agencies were satisfactorily conducted ; in others much difficulty was experienced in consequence of the insolvency of agents or business delinquencies. The Department was quite unable to control the business of the agencies, as a whole, in a satisfactory manner. Ere long, the ordinary shops of the country were able to supply the articles as cheaply as the agencies, and the latter were gradually wound up by the Board of Education. 2. Under the "Common Schools Act, 1871," the text books and apparatus prescribed by the Board of Education are not supplied through any Departmental agency. Parents provide their children with text books through the ordinary book shops, but trustees have power to supply indigent pupils with these books free of charge : and, also, the children of any person who, after notice, neglects or refuses to furnish the required books. In this latter case a special rate is imposed upon the parent or guardian. The general apparatus is purchased, of course, by the trustees. 3. During the last three years of my superintendency in Nova Scotia, the prescribed text books and apparatus for the schools of that Province were supplied to the trustees (to be held in trust as the property of the section), through a central agency under the supervision of the Educational Department at Halifax. The articles were sent out on the orders of the trustees in any quantity, and at first at one-half, and later at three-quarters, the *prime* cost. A special discount was made in favour of poor sections. This agency at once secured, what private enterprise had failed to do, the extensive circulation of the best School materials, as the following figures will indicate :—

No. of Trustees Orders.		Cash value of the articles sent out (at *prime* cost).
1867,	1435.	$26,776.
1868,	1433.	21,520.
1869,	1298.	18,184.

The number of orders reported in 1870 was 1328, and the value of the articles sent out $18,742. In 1871, my successor did away with the central agency, and substituted orders upon the booksellers in all parts of the Province ; and in 1872 the Legislature (with the concurrence I believe, of the Superintendent and the Council of Public Instruction), permanently abolished the special grant in aid of prescribed text-books and apparatus. In view of my experience and observation in the matter of the supplying of text-books and apparatus, I have no hesitation in saying that I regard any public system of education defective, which does not provide for the Departmental supply of all prescribed text-books and apparatus at reduced rates to the Trustees of Schools. It is a matter of as great moment as to secure the use of a uniform series of books. There is no other possible way by which this educational vantage ground can be reached, which is so easy, speedy, and far-reaching. I regard the arrangements of the Ontario system in this behalf, as the right arm of efficient school administration.

4. In reference to School Libraries, my experience has not been extensive. The Education Department of New Brunswick has, since 1858, promoted the establishing of such Libraries,—paying fifty per cent. of the amount expended by trustees (the sum of this per centage not exceeding twenty dollars in any year). The books are selected by the trustees, at any booksellers (usually at a discount of ten per cent.), the list of the books is presented for the approval of the Chief Superintendent, and the per centage is paid over. This plan works very well, and secures, a very moderate increase of libraries, I regard the plan pursued in Ontario as far superior, however, and calculated to confer a priceless boon upon all the people. I could only wish that the financial resources of the Education Department of N. B. would permit the immediate establishment of an agency similar to that of Ontario.

Robert Kay, Esq., Secretary, South Australian Institute.—I have the honour by direction of the Board of Governors of the S. A. Institute, to acknowledge receipt of a circular from your Department, asking for opinions relative to the supplying of schools with books, apparatus, &c., by the Department.

I am directed to say in reply, that the Board referred your communication to one of their members who is Chief Inspector (Gov.) of Education for this Province, and that his reply was that he could not offer any opinion on the subject, as the system hitherto in use here is very different from yours. The Board of Education here supplies school books only, and apparently the booksellers do not care for the business, at any rate they raise no objection. The Board of Governors are therefore unable to offer any opinion which could be of any value to you.

James Bath, Esq., Secretary, Board of Education, Adelaide, South Australia.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular, directing attention to the question of supply of class, prize and library books to Public Schools by the Education Department.

As requested, I beg in reply to state, that, during the twenty-one years the present education law has been in operation in this colony, it has been found requisite, by the Education Board, to keep a depôt for the supply of books and apparatus for the service of the Public Schools. A new law is about to supersede the present one, but that will also contain a provision for the establishment and maintenance of a school book depôt.

In my opinion, such an establishment is absolutely required in connexion with any Public School system, in order (1) that a full and suitable supply of books and apparatus shall always be obtainable, and (2) that such books and apparatus shall be sold to the teachers at the lowest possible charge.

3. Replies from Inspectors in Ontario.

A. W. Ross, Esq., Inspector, Co. Glengarry.—In reply to your circular, I beg leave to state, that, for various reasons, I consider the Educational Depository very useful, and almost necessary for the Schools in this County. Prizes encourage and stimulate pupils, and are thus of great benefit to our Schools. The good effects thus derived from them would be lost were it not for the favourable terms on which they may be obtained from the Depository. Even if trustees would purchase them elsewhere, the selection would necessarily be poor in comparison with the selections sent at present. So that people would become dissatisfied with them, and eventually give up distributing them. It would be difficult to get trustees to obtain the maps and apparatus really necessary for their Schools should the Depository be abolished. The apparatus sent out at present gives satisfaction; but if trustees were obliged to purchase and select for themselves, wherever they could obtain such articles as were required, then our Schools would be filled with trash. For they are not proper judges of these things, and would buy anything that might be peddled through the country, as long as it was cheap. Not only would the articles be poorer, but there would not be that uniformity now existing, and which is very desirable for the efficiency of our Schools.

Alexander McNaughton, Esq., Inspector Co. Stormont.—I consider the Depository to be one of the most valuable parts of the Educational machinery of the Province. I consider it necessary, because, although wealthy sections may be able and willing to tax themselves for the purpose of procuring these articles from the Booksellers at their ordinary prices, yet the great majority of school sections will not voluntary do so, unless stimulated by the inducement of obtaining superior articles at less than half their usual prices. My own opinion in regard to the effect of public libraries is, that, by their means, a taste for reading and a desire for information are diffused among the people, who are consequently led to purchase books for supplying themselves and their families with reading matter. The stimulus afforded by prizes in schools is well known, and has been the means of arousing the dormant faculties of many young persons, who afterwards arose to eminence and distinction; but in order that these incitements should be extended to all, some such arrangements as that of the Educational Depository is required. Differences of opinion, with regard to some of the provisions of the School Law and Regulations, are frequently expressed, but I have not met with any person concerned in the management of schools who offered in my hearing an opinion unfavourable to the Educational Depository; and when I have hinted to some trus-

tees the possibility of its being discontinued, they expressed the utmost surprise that it could be considered good policy to abolish so useful an establishment. If trustees are to be compelled by law to furnish their schools with Maps, Apparatus and Libraries, it appears to be almost a necessity that the government should provide facilities for enabling them to comply with the requirements of the Law and Regulations.

T. O. Steele, Esq., Inspector, Co. Prescott.—In reply to your circular in reference to supplying Libraries and Prize Books, Maps, Apparatus, &c., to the High and Public Schools, I beg to say that I have carefully considered the objections raised to the present system, and also your answer to said objections ; and consider that you have fully shown that the objections made are not only illogical as to their conclusions, but false as to their premises. I believe that the Department of Public Instruction is the proper source from which such supplies should flow to our Schools, and I am fnlly convinced, that the addition of the one hundred per cent. has had the effect of causing many times the amount of books, &c., to be purchased, than would have been had such advantageous terms not been offered. It is difficult to get a proper supply for the Schools in most counties, even of the ordinary text books, from the country merchants ; but how much more difficult would it be to obtain a supply of such requisites as Maps, Globes, and other apparatus, which are far too costly and the sale too limited to warrant their being kept in stock except in towns or cities. The Library and Prize Book system has introduced books into thousands of families into which they would never have otherwise found their way, and has aroused a demand for literature which has very largely increased the trade of the very booksellers who complain so loudly. Further, the character of the books introduced by the Department of Public Instruction, has been such as to create a taste for a much higher and purer literature than would have been created by books selected by incompetent or careless judges ; and who can foretell the great and beneficial influence of such literature upon the future destinies of our country. In conclusion, I think the present system, with any modifications which may be found beneficial, should be continued, because it is the duty of any government to engender and carry out such measures as shall conduce to the happiness of the people by promoting their intellectual, moral, and material interests ; and the present system of furnishing maps, books, &c., to the Schools of Ontario, does this—1st—By diffusing knowledge, and stimulating intellectual activity. 2nd—By cultivating a taste for a full and elevating literature. 3rd—By increasing the book trade by the stimulus given to a desire for book knowledge, by encouraging native talent and industry in the manufacture of books, maps, &c., and finally by that *material* prosperity which *invariably follows* a general diffusion of intellectual enlightenment.

Rev. Thomas Garrett, Inspector, Co. Russell.—I am happy to be able to state, in reply to your letter, that my experience in the working of the Depository of the Department is becoming more extensive. There is more interest manifested at present than heretofore in the distribution of prizes in the Schools. The prizes are generally obtained from the Depository, and invariably give general satisfaction. In a few instances prizes were procured from other sources than the Department. I have been present at the distribution of both kinds ; those from Department and those not, and I observed in two Schools as to numbers—(1) The selection from Depository elicited more interest, was more diversified, better suited to the capacity of the School, and being distributed on the merit card system, aroused no suspicion of unfairness as in the other case. I observed—(2) The prizes from the Department cost less money, time and labour. (3) I have no hesitation whatever in stating, that the reading matter was more reliable, besides the great advantage of having a number of useful articles, and others calculated to arouse a spirit of scientific enquiry. Surely no one possessed of the most ordinary intelligence, will question the utility of properly furnished School-houses, and carefully selected libraries in every community. My experience in Canada has led me to observe that not only the growth of intelligence, but also of material prosperity is traceable to, and to a very considerable extent, commensurate with the interest manifested in the Public School and library. As far as my experience extends I believe : (1) The Depository is an interference with "the trade" for good, for I think many a man would go down to his grave without having even read a book, but for the fact that through the Depository, a book has been placed in his hand which suited him, and led him to take an interest, read more, and purchase of "the trade," perhaps for his rising genera-

tion. (2) I consider the advantage of procuring requisites suitable for our 5,000 Schools, would be found to be attended with more labour than could be performed to the satisfaction of the purchasers, when we take into account that trustee corporations generally prefer the selections to be made for them, and if it could not be made in one establishment, how could it be made at all? I cannot devise a plan so satisfactory to the public as the present, who can? In conclusion, Rev. Sir, allow me to say, that I did not think it was necessary for me to say anything in defence of the Depository, when we could be supplied with so much facility and satisfaction, so far as the Department is concerned. I am convinced that any effort made for the suppression of the Depository, until a better method of supplying the country is devised, and that any aspirations calculated to weaken the public confidence in, and patronage of the Depository before a better scheme for provision is promulgated and established, will result in serious conflict with the best interests of education in this Province.

Rev. John May, M.A., Inspector, Co. Carleton:—In reply to your circular I have the honour to say that I willingly avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded to me to bear testimony to the soundness of that policy which would place literature, &c., of a pure and wholesome character within reach of all classes of the community. I am convinced that the Education Department, in supplying the Public and High Schools of the country with books, maps and apparatus, is conferring a substantial boon, not only on the children but on the people themselves, and deserves, not the censure, but the warmest commendation of every intelligent unprejudiced mind. A somewhat extended experience as pupil, teacher, and Inspector affording me, as it has, a close familiarity with the literary wants of the masses, warrants me in the unqualified expression of this opinion. Any person who believes in the dissemination of useful and entertaining literature, and is at the same time aware of the famine of books which prevails almost everywhere in the rural regions of this country, must, I think, be convinced, that something more than the mere shop of the bookseller is needed as a means of removing a defect so deplorable. The bookseller has taken fright at a bug-bear. In his opposition to this "monopoly" he is *opposing* his *own interests* as a vendor of books. The butchers stall at Easter is a refreshing spectacle; but it would prove a losing exhibition to the butcher if nobody could be found with an Easter appetite for beef and mutton. Thus the matter stands as between the trade and the people; there is little or no appetite for books; and the trade by its crusade against the Depository says in effect. "There *shall* be no appetite for books." Can human ingenuity conceive a course of action more suicidal than this? The Depository, then, is no enemy to the trade; and it is not pretended that it is hostile to any other interests whatsoever. On the contrary, this department of our educational system, if brought into full play, would prove most highly conducive to the best interests of all classes, and *particularly to those of the booksellers*. It seems to me, especially in a new country such as this is, settled for the most part by a class not distinguished for the variety and extensiveness of its private libraries, that an Educational Depository, managed as is yours, is precisely what the country wants. Without it, the educational arena would be little better than a valley of dry bones. I suppose the ordinary book-merchant has been plying his excellent vocation among us from the first; but where are the books? Go into the farmers' houses, and a very hollow echo will answer "where"? It is only too painfully manifest that he has not succeeded in introducing his intellectual wares where they are most needed. The cute-peddler has had the start of him. Not unfrequently you *will* find a few volumes of trash, purchased at twice their original cost and ten times their intrinsic value, from one of these enterprising strolling Bibliopoles; but the sound, substantial literature of the respectable bookseller is only conspicuous by its absence. I contend, Sir, that, if there be, among the agricultural population of this country, a want more hideously conspicuous than another, it is the lack of books; unless, indeed, I should say a keen relish for the nutritious mental pabulum which a wholesome book both sates and stimulates. These must be supplied by such a machinery as that under consideration, or they will never be supplied at all. The average farmer is surrounded with the necessaries and comforts (often the luxuries) of a *physical* existence; he could afford to stock his shelves with books; but does he generally do so? No. He feels no wish to do so. He sends his children to school at great expense; they learn reading, writing, and arithmetic; and on these their souls must live and thrive. Indeed it is a

great loss of time, and waste of money, to try to educate our youth without free access to books of miscellaneous information, by which their minds would be simultaneously fed, expanded, stored and stimulated. The education of the School-room is, after all, but a fleshless skeleton ; although it costs this country hundreds of thousands per annum, against which cost no outcry is raised, and yet, when it is proposed, at a very trifling expense to clothe the bare bones with flesh and sinew, and fair skin, and the golden locks of a ripened culture lo ! from Dan to B. comes forth a piteous howl of distress, dismay, and anguish. I not only approve of the existence and management of the Education Depository, but I also give my *ex animo* assent to that part of the law which makes the establishment of a library in every section obligatory on trustees. I sincerely hope that this will be carried out. But how can it be done better than with the aid of the Department as at present ? Suppose the Education Depository was annihilated to-morrow ; a rural section must establish a library : how is this to be done ? In the first place the amount to be raised deters : next the difficulty of selecting the proper books : lastly, the still greater difficulty of finding a place in which to select them. Trustees, in general, would shrink from such a task ; the teacher might attempt it, or might not ; the Inspector is already overworked ; I fear there would be few libraries established in this way. Take away the Depository, and you may as well rescind that part of the law which obliges trustees to establish libraries in their sections. Under the present system a very trifling sum of money procures quite a respectable lot of books ; and there is little or no trouble in making a selection or having it made. I agree with Horace Mann in that manly sentiment : "Had I the power, I would scatter libraries over the whole land, as the sower sows his seed." There is, however, little use in sowing seed in unprepared fields ; and I feel that the people are not as yet in a state to appreciate a library to the full. Of course the existence of a library in a locality will itself tend more or less to cultivate a taste for reading ; but of this I am certain ; could you plant a good library to-morrow in every School Section in Ontario ; and could you visit every section on that day twelve-month, you would be utterly confounded at the little use that had been made of the books. (I speak from experience.) Does this prove the uselessness of libraries ? By no means. But it does prove *something*. It suggests the idea of going back a step. People must be *trained* for a library. How is this training to be accomplished ? This is a question more easily asked than answered. I have observed that *Prize* books are read when library books are neglected. Children will, at first, read prize books simply because they *are* prize books ; and parents, just because they are their children's prizes. After a while both parents and children will take to reading library books from a growing *desire* to read, begotten of the prize book. This desire, once created, will seek its proper gratification ; will gather strength as it grows, will grow as it is gratified. I would say then, let these libraries be established everywhere ; but, for the present at least, let the *chief store be laid on the dissemination of Prizes.* Indeed there is little genuine life in a School in which prizes are not awarded ; and to be healthfully awarded they must be distributed on the merit card system. I have also another suggestion to offer, which if capable of practical application, would, I feel convinced, do more than anything else to engender a taste for reading. I am not aware that it has ever been tried ; and, therefore, I merely throw it out as a hint. It is this ; *a daily or weekly paper for Schools.* Every merchant looks for his morning paper before going to business ; every farmer looks eagerly for his weekly news. Can nothing be done for the children in this line ? My own son read the newspapers regularly at ten years of age, and often puzzled me with astute questions on the great political problems of the day. Is it within the range of possibility to put a secular "child's paper" into the hands of every child (able to read) in our Schools ? If so, would it be lost time to spend half an hour in the morning in "glancing" over it, before proceeding to the "business of the day." If this could be done (and I cannot see why it should not) it would expand the youthful *intelligence* and, I think every School Inspector will bear me out if I say, that in country Schools nothing strikes one more forcibly than the lack, not of natural, but of cultivated intelligence. Show me a child that habitually reads the papers, and I will show you one that will read *understandingly* the ordinary lessons of his reader or his history. It would be a magnificent spectacle, that of hundreds of thousands of copies of an unsectarian, non political paper flying over the land, daily or weekly, to the hands of the children of the land, whose School days are only too generally overshadowed by the wings

of a wearisome monotony, whose hard lot it seems to be, to languish under the burden of a very *tedium vitæ*. If we could give a paper to *every* child, and a prize book, given to every *deserving* child, we should have begun at the right place, and paved the way towards certain success in making our "Public School libraries indeed the very crown and glory of the Institutions of the Province." And now, Sir, in conclusion, as one of the Public School Inspectors of this country; as a native Canadian, proud of the old Flag, proud of Canada's free yet firm institutions, and especially of her grand educational system -proud, I say, of all these things, but ashamed of the illiteracy which even yet too extensively prevails, I beg leave to enter my solemn protest against a proposition which would wound her in a vital part, and go far to render nugatory and null her world-famed system of education. I regard the Education Depository as this country's chief-store house of the corn and wine of Education, and its enemies as the enemies unwittingly of the rising generation.

Rev. Geo. Blair, M.A., Inspector, Co. Grenville.—As an educationist I should very much regret the abolition or the curtailment of the Book and Apparatus Depository in Toronto, which I consider to be not only a distinguishing feature of our School system, but even an essential part of it. The Schools supply instruction through text books and certificated teachers, who are partly paid by the Government; the Depository supplies, on precisely the same principle, the aids and appliances required in accomplishing this work, and also a vast mass of excellent reading material, in the shape of cheap, well-selected libraries and prizes, without which the instruction communicated at School could not be turned to any good account, or would actually be put to a bad use in devouring the trashy and corrupt literature which floods the neighbouring States. To show that in expressing a decided and earnest opinion on this subject, I am not a person likely to be prepossessed in favour of Government monopoly or Departmental interference, I may state that I was long connected with the liberal newspaper press of England and Scotland, and was for some time engaged on the literary staff of the Anti-Corn-Law League organ published in London under the superintendence of Messrs. Cobden and Bright. My sympathies are therefore, as might be supposed, strongly in favour of free trade, and of the non-interference of Government (in ordinary cases) with the law of supply and demand. At the same time I hold that there are necessary exceptions to this rule, as well as to other rules, and that the Book Depository is one of them. Our entire School system, in fact—like all other national systems of education—is a standing exception to the rule. It assumes by the very fact of its existence, that the natural demand for education is not sufficient of itself to ensure an adequate supply, and that it is for the interest of the Province to subsidize voluntary effort, not only by compulsory taxation but also by a liberal grant of money. The tendency of this is clearly to discourage private schools, or in other words it stands directly opposed to free trade in teaching; yet few will be found bold enough to affirm that our national system of education should be abolished because it interferes with the business or with the profits of certain private teachers. And if the Government chooses to go further than this, and say that the teaching in Schools, by teachers under Government supervision, shall be supplemented by the teaching of libraries and prize-books provided under similar guarantees, and fenced round with similar safeguards, I must say that I cannot see any objection to the action of the Government in the one case which would not apply equally in the other. As a thorough free-trader, I repeat that the book trade has no more right to demand the abolition of the Depository than private teachers to demand the destruction of the Public School system itself. The result of this crusade, if accomplished, would be simply to hand over the supply of libraries and prize-books to a ring of wealthy monopolists, who would soon make them costly as well as dangerous luxuries; and no Canadian who is alive to the best interests of this country will join in a cry which has originated with the book trade alone. The interests of the country are more important than those of a few large bookselling houses, even if the two interests stood opposed to each other, which really is not the case; for the taste for reading is an appetite which "grows with what it feeds on," and I believe that to a great extent the Depository has actually created our book trade, and even still largely supports it. I very much doubt, therefore, whether even the book trade itself would benefit by abolishing the Depository; but I have no doubt whatever that every other class, and especially the educational interests of the Province, would suffer most mate

rially by the change. Of late there has been a cry for a free library in Toronto, although that city is already provided with a splendid University library, the shelves of which are courteously open to all comers. In the country, and country towns, we have no such valuable privilege. Our only chance of obtaining anything like library accommodation in the country is through the Book Depository in Toronto, which has already been the means of establishing numerous free libraries throughout the Province ; and I for one sincerely hope to see the value of that institution still more generally recognized, and its usefulness largely extended by additional means placed at its disposal.

Robert Kinney, Esq., M. D., Inspector, No. 2, Leeds.—In reply to circular, I have the honour to say that I delayed reply in order to ascertain the public opinion on the subject, as well as the private opinion of persons more or less interested in education: and as a result of my enquiry, I find that School Corporations are almost unanimous in favour of the Depository. On the other hand the booksellers are altogether unanimous in its condemnation. Thus you see that the opinion of the few who are interested is diametrically opposed to that of the many who are designed to be benefited. My own opinion is that to do away with the Depository at present would be to do a grievous wrong to our Public Schools, as well as to impede the flow of that stream of intelligence, small though it be, which finds its way and carries its beneficent influence into the remotest parts of the land.

Wm. R. Bigg, Esq., Inspector, No. 1, Leeds.—I am somewhat at a loss how to reply to the circular received from Dr. Hodgins, inasmuch as I feel extremely diffident in advising one so much better informed than myself, touching the policy of sustaining the Depository in supplying maps, apparatus, library and prize books to the Public and High Schools of Ontario. I can, however, frankly state my opinion, based upon an extensive experience, that incalculable benefit has been derived by the public from the Depository. Whether its existence is an injury to the trade, I am, perhaps, not so well qalified to judge, though I think the truth of the assertion may be questioned, at all events, as far as the "trade" at large is concerned. Probably some wealthy publishers and exporters are desirous of a monopoly, and the crusade is doubtless as much against the Depositary as the Depository, for were the latter closed, the privilege of supplying would be transferred to a few, to the detriment of the many ; as in that case, I presume, the Departmental assistance of 100 per cent. would necessarily be stopped. The "trade," we are told, "can as *equally well supply* library and prize books, as it *now does text books.*" But this is an argument against them, for the exorbitant prices *now charged* for the present text books, are far from satisfactory, especially when it is remembered that the *old* "Fifth Book" *was furnished by the Department* at 10s. 6d. per doz., whereas the *new one is supplied by the "trade" at 2s. 6d. per single* copy. I have no doubt, therefore, that the "trade" could as *equally well supply* all School requisites "*as it now does text books,*" and for this very reason I object to its having the opportunity, as the cost of maps and apparatus would be enhanced in the same proportion, and our Schools would cease getting them in consequence. For the foregoing reasons, therefore, I am decidedly of opinion that closing the *present* Depository, and interfering with existing arrangements, would be prejudicial to the interests of the public and injurious to the cause of education.

Henry Lloyd Slack, Esq., M.A., Inspector, Co. Lanark.—I have the honour to state in reply to your circular, that on the whole the Depository of the Education Department seems to me both necessary, well conducted and entitled to the support of educationists in this Province. If I were to add any suggestion in the way of improvement, it would be that some of the smaller articles such as tablet and object lessons, merit-cards, registration sheets, &c., should be furnished to the local booksellers (on application) at such a price that they might be able to retail them at the same figure as is done at the Department.

Rev. E. H. Jenkyns, M. A., Inspector, Co. Renfrew.—I have the honour to reply to your circular requesting my views in reference to the Educational Depository. It appears that certain persons have been of late conducting a series of systematic attacks upon the Educational Depository, as an institution which affords no real benefit to the country, and as being detrimental to the "book trade." These objections, so far as I know, have not been raised by trustees or by people really interested in the welfare of our Schools, but by persons who would reap considerable advantage to themselves, if they could only succeed

in their efforts of doing away with the Depository. The more attention I give to the matter, the more am I convinced that it is hardly possible to correctly estimate the immense advantages which accrue to the Schools of the country from the existence of the Depository. I might point to several sections in this county, where ratepayers are few and poor, which would find it a very difficult matter to provide maps and other School requisites, were it not for the liberal provisions of the Department of Public Instruction through the Depository. I am therefore convinced, and I feel sure I represent the conviction of all interested in our Schools, that the Depository is a great advantage to all Schools, but especially so to poor sections. Another reason which I adduce in favour of the Depository is this, it prevents a large number of unreliable, if not worthless, maps being foisted at extravagant prices upon School Sections, to the great injury of the Schools. I have known instances of trustees purchasing, at their own doors from peddlers, maps which cost about three times what would be paid for the Depository's maps, which were so inaccurate and, on national grounds, so objectionable that I immediately caused them to be removed. When it is known that maps can be bought at the Department for about one-fourth of what they would cost elsewhere (in this country), and when it is known that these maps are good and reliable, then we can readily estimate the advantages derived from the Depository. If it were not for this institution, our trustees would be to a very considerable extent at the mercy of peddlers. Then again, the same argument holds good in reference to the "book trade." Some trustees think it a very great advantage to be able to make a personal selection in the purchase of prize books, &c., and what is the consequence? It is not to be expected that when trustees enter a book-store, that they have the time or inclination to read the books which they are about to purchase, and therefore they take those books which they think suitable from external appearance and title. As a natural consequence, I have found several very objectionable books given away as prizes to pupils of Public Schools. Some of those books were miserable tales, concerning ghosts and fairies, others again made heroes of murderers, highwaymen, and such characters as have been justly execrated by the great and good. And I fear if the supply of library and prize books were left entirely in the hands of the "trade," many a book would find its way into our families, which would not only have a very pernicious influence upon its members, but which would in course of time exercise a bad influence upon us nationally. Are the pupils of our Schools to be exposed to these dangers just simply to enrich the pockets of a few interested persons? Is it not sound in principle and wise in arrangement that the Government should protect itself and the public, and at the same time have a watchful regard for the welfare of its Schools, by making such an arrangement as will meet the requirements of the case? When it is known that books sold by the Depository have the 100% added to the purchase money; when it is borne in mind that these books have been carefully selected by competent persons and are calculated to answer moral, intellectual and national purposes, then surely no unprejudiced mind requires to be convinced of the great advantages of a Depository. And lastly, I believe that all persons in this county interested in Public Schools, would look upon the disestablishment of this institution as a public calamity which would have a disastrous effect upon our Schools.

John Agnew, Esq., M.D., Inspector, Co. Frontenac.—I have the honor to state in reply to your communication, that, having carefully examined the summary of objections urged against the Educational Depository, with the replies to them, I am of opinion that the objections urged cannot be successfully sustained. During the 13 years in which I was engaged as a teacher, I have been the means of procuring hundreds of volumes from the Depository, as prizes for my pupils, and have always been well satisfied with the books received, which were partly selected by myself from the Educational Catalogue, and partly by the Department. On one occasion when about to send for a supply of prizes, I was informed by a certain teacher that his trustees were in the habit of purchasing prize books in Kingston, as they could be procured cheaper there than from the Depository, consequently to test the genuineness of the prizes, I procured a catalogue of prize books with the prices of the same from one of the leading booksellers of Kingston, also a catalogue from the Depository, showing the prices of the books issued therefrom, and found on a careful comparison of the prices, that for every $5. worth of books purchased in Kingston, I could obtain $12. worth from the Depository, showing clearly to my mind, that the terms and prices of the Department as published were genuine. Fur-

thermore, the aforesaid teacher was lately sent by trustees to the Depository to procure prize books and apparatus for their School, the trustees paying his expenses to and from Toronto, and he informed me that after his expenses were paid, the books &c., purchased from the Depository were considerably cheaper than could have been obtained from the booksellers in Kingston. From observations of my own, while travelling through this country, I have found that agents and travellers throughout the rural districts, have, with a few good books, disposed of a great number of pernicious and worthless books; in a few sections they have disposed of maps which were entirely worthless and ill-adapted for School purposes. It is to be hoped that the Executive Government and the Legislature will not abolish the Depository, until every School in this Province has been supplied with maps, apparatus and library books. Should they do so at the next session of the Legislature, as intended, and before the Schools are supplied, education would receive a serious check, and the Schools, in my opinion, would either be retarded or be at a stand still for years to come, as ignorant trustees would never obtain suitable prize books, apparatus, &c., from booksellers or their agents.

Frederick Burrows, Esq., Inspector, U. Cos. Lennox and Addington.—In reply to your circular, I beg to state that the present system by which the Schools are supplied with library books, maps, &c., by the Education Department meets my entire approval; and I am more than ever impressed with the great benefits which it has conferred upon the youth of the Province. I am of opinion that many of our Schools would still be without the apparatus necessary to make them efficient if it were not for the facilities afforded under the present system. The departmental regulations are so simple and so generally known and understood that our trustees experience but little trouble in getting what their Schools need in the shape of prize-books, maps, &c. During last year prizes were given in forty-eight of the Schools of this County, and in no instance have I heard the slightest dissatisfaction expressed with the cost or style of the books, but in many cases the prizes and mode of obtaining them have been spoken of in terms of the highest approval. The same remark holds in regard to the maps, globes, &c., which have been furnished to our Schools. With reference to libraries, I can scarcely conceive how any one not directly interested in the *trade* can find fault with a system which so readily puts within the reach of our youth the facilities for cultivating a taste for useful reading. The inclination to read will generally accompany the ability to do so, and if our young people be not supplied with good wholesome mental food, they will most likely find access to those trifling, silly and often pernicious works of the imagination with which our land is fairly deluged, and in consequence have their tastes vitiated, their morals corrupted, and their minds filled with thoughts which will in many cases lead to lives of crime and folly. I trust in a short time to see a Public School library from the Department in every School section under my jurisdiction. I would regret exceedingly the abolition of the present system, as I consider it highly beneficial. I may add, that the School authorities here fully appreciate the great facilities afforded by the Department for getting maps, apparatus, prizes, &c. for their Schools. Yesterday I had the pleasure of presenting one hundred and sixty dollars worth of prizes obtained from the Depository of the Department to the pupils of the High and Public Schools of Napanee. In regard to the character of the books, the promptness with which they were sent, and the great care taken by the Depository officials in selecting and transmitting them, the highest satisfaction has been expressed by all connected with the Schools. It is my mature conviction that apart from the one hundred per cent. allowed, the benefits arising from the present system are such that its abolition would entail serious injury to the cause of education in this Province. In many cases trustees would not know where to get School requisites which are now so readily obtained from the Depository and with many others the extra trouble and expense would, I fear, prevent the Schools from being properly supplied. In view of the great advantages conferred upon our Schools by the present system I sincerely hope that all attempts to abolish it will prove abortive. You will shortly receive a copy of a resolution carried unanimously at a meeting of the Lennox and Addington Teachers' Association earnestly deprecating the abolition of the Depository.

Thomas S. Agar, Esq., Inspector, No. 1, *Hastings.*—I have the honour to enclose herewith a statement giving the results of my experience upon the subjects set forth in your circular,

and, at the same time, to express my regret that I have not been able sooner to communicate it to you. After a careful perusal of the statements furnished by the Department, relative to the general regulations for the supply of library and prize books, maps and apparatus to the Public Schools of Ontario, and as the result of some years' experience as Local Superintendent and Inspector of Public Schools in North Hastings, I cannot come to any other conclusion than that it would be injurious to the Public Schools to interfere with the grant of 100 per cent. allowed to sections on the purchase of prize books, School Section libraries, maps, apparatus, &c,, issued from the Depository of the Department. The following statement of the growth and development of this Section of Ontario is the result of personal experience, and will serve to illustrate the causes of forming the opinions I entertain upon this subject. The rural population of this Section of Ontario consists mainly of those who have had to fight their way through all the difficulties of a settler's life, by untiring industry and perseverance, with little or no capital to aid them in their struggles, and many of them, too, with little or no education. These men are the fathers of the generation now beginning to act their part in life, or being educated in the Public Schools, to take their places as citizens of the Dominion. The local newspaper at first, followed by the weeklies of the capital, and the agricultural journals, whose circulation was promoted and encouraged by the Agricultural Societies, together with a newspaper devoted to the church of the reader, formed generally (but by degrees) the staple and almost exclusive reading matter of the farmer, indeed the numbers of the old farmers, and also their children, who read as extensively as above stated, were, and are, few and far between, and may be regarded as the exception, not the rule. The great and continued physical exertions required in clearing the land, want of means and leisure, unfitted the men for other literary indulgence or pursuits than those of the public prints. The Bible, the wonders of nature and Providence, and some stray works, interspersed in occasional localities with a few treasured volumes brought from home, were in fact the literary treasures of a rural section, more frequently honoured by displays as mementoes of home than in their perusal. Some few years after the introduction of the School Law, many of the young people of the country began to prepare and educate themselves for teachers ; and, so far as the acquirements of the branches for passing the Boards of Education required, and the text books afforded them the means, made an advance in the right direction. They gradually spread through the country a number of young men and women whose influence is beginning to develop itself in the rising genera tion ; but the means for the purchase of books, or, indeed, the taste for and desire to read, was then far more limited than at present. Looking upon a love for reading as the result not merely of sufficient education to read and understand works of general literature, but also as dependent upon and extended through a country by the congenial tastes, habits and feelings of those with whom we associate and live in daily intercourse. I sought to introduce, by means of annual competitive township examinations, works for that purpose, obtained from the Depository, as prizes, into the homes of the successful competitors ; and, aided by the liberal donations of friends of education, and the Municipal Councils, a great number of good books were taken into the homes of our rural population, where I still see them honoured not merely as prizes, but by the evidence they bear on their leaves of honoured thumb-marks. Individual efforts are now more effectively replaced by School Section libraries, in addition to the township libraries, and are the recognized means of furnishing the people with works to read. Townships contain amongst their readers families of every religious body, and every shade of politics. School Sections, in this respect, are but a portion of a township. I believe it is generally conceded that the works furnished to the public libraries ought to be selected by competent authority, as upon their selection the principles and moral tone of the community must to some extent depend. Neither township councils nor School section trustees could undertake this duty ; and constituted as the Board of Public Instruction for Ontario is, and the principles upon which it is stated to be guided in the selection of library and prize books, I do not know of any body to whom could be more safely and fairly entrusted their selection. The question of monopoly by the Department, to the injury of the book-trade, is refuted by the Chief Superintendent in his first reply to the objections urged against the Depository, and as shown by the value of imported books for the periods therein stated ; and though, upon principle, I should consider any monopoly by the Go-

vernment which tended to curtail or injure the book-trade as bad policy, yet, bearing in mind the great importance of the selection of books, the fostering care with which the taste for reading is promoted and encouraged by the Department, that it is a work of time to raise up and educate from our people a reading public, and that in the meantime the book-trade now is, and will be, annually reaping the benefits resulting from the increased intelligence and love of reading among the people, I cannot, I say, bearing this in mind, think that the monopoly complained of is adverse to the book-trade. The inhabitants of the School Sections have, since the School Law Amendment Act of 1871, been called upon to tax themselves very heavily to comply with the requirements of that Act, exclusive of the demands made upon them for maps, apparatus, and School Section libraries; and taking into consideration the value of assessed property in the several School Sections in North Hastings, and the importance with which we must regard the successful establishment of School Section libraries, and the furnishing every School with maps and apparatus, I should look upon the withdrawal of the 100 per cent. advance upon the amount furnished by the trustees for that purpose as a great injury to the Public Schools, and also as calculated seriously to retard and impede the education of the youth of this country, and the subsequent development of the vast resources we possess, and which require but an educated people to reap the benefit of. I beg to add, in conclusion, that the selection of books by the Department for prizes, and also for School Section libraries, has in all cases coming under my notice given entire satisfaction.

John Johnston, Esq., Inspector, No. 2, Hastings.—In reply to your circular, I beg leave to say that it would be impossible to supply our Schools with maps, apparatus, tablets and object lessons, library and prize books, &c., were it not for the encouragement given by the Department in granting the 100 per cent. My own experience since my appointment as Inspector is that more than half of the Schools of South Hastings could not have been supplied with the above articles had it not been for the inducement, that if five or more dollars were sent, maps, tablets and object lessons, &c., would be sent in value equal to twice the amount of money sent. The prize and library books sent from the Department have always given the best satisfaction to teachers, parents, trustees and scholars. My own experience as teacher for over fourteen years, and as Inspector, enables me to say that the prize and library books have been of great benefit to the scholars of our Schools, and also to parents, for I have known in many cases where there were no books in the family till those given to the children were brought home, but afterwards when those books had been read by all the members of the family, it created a taste for reading, and induced the parents to purchase more books, thereby benefiting the booksellers rather than injuring them, as I believe they sell more books afterwards. The books sent out by the Department have been of the right kind to create a taste for reading, and to instil into the minds of both young and old good moral principles and general information. The Department, in granting the 100 per cent., and in supplying the Schools with maps, apparatus, tablet and object lessons, &c., confers a great benefit on the Schools and people of South Hastings, and, in my opinion and experience, it does not in any way interfere with private enterprise, but rather helps in that direction.

Gilbert D. Platt, Esq., Inspector, Co. Prince Edward.—In reply to your circular, requesting the benefit of my observation of the Depository connected with your Department, I have the honour to make the following statements:—That, although the principle involved appears to some extent objectionable, yet in view of the very satisfactory character of the work performed by the Educational Depository of Ontario, I think it would prove a great misfortune to the interests of education to abandon it, at least so long as it is carried on as satisfactorily as in the past. Especially does this apply to the maps and apparatus branch, the closing of which would, I believe, result in very great injury to our schools, by destroying altogether the uniformity at present existing, and placing trustees at the mercy of unscrupulous dealers, who would often supply inferior articles. A few examples of this have already occurred in our county. Another consideration of weight exists in the important stimulus afforded to trustees by the encouragement of the 100 per cent. addition to remittances, the loss of which would be seriously felt. In conclusion, my experience of the working and results of the Depository are favourable to its continuance, and my deliberate conviction is that it would be a grave mistake to throw the very difficult and important duties it discharges open to public compe-

tition. Some few individual booksellers and agents might gain by such a change, but the general interests and welfare of the youth of Ontario would be seriously compromised. I believe education needs all the fostering care and encouragement that it is possible for our enlightened Government to provide for it.

J. J. Tilley, Esq., Inspector, Co. Durham.—Before replying to your circular, I consulted the teachers of several Schools in which prizes are regularly given, and of those for which libraries have been provided. In every instance entire satisfaction was expressed with the *kind* of books furnished by the Depository, and with the price, and the desire was also expressed that Government aid might be continued. That the present system of supplying Schools with books, maps, and other school requisites has been found satisfactory and profitable, is clearly shown by the increase of purchases. In 1868 the value of maps, books, &c., purchased from the Depository for the Schools in this County was $355 84, and the number of prize books, 833. In 1871 the amount of purchase was $721 48, and the number of books, 1701, an increase of over 100 per cent. in three years. The maps furnished by the Depository are distinct, durable and cheap. Four years ago a travelling agent for maps, succeeded in supplying about twenty of our Schools with a map of Europe and America, at a price higher than that charged by the Depository for a superior article. There is now scarcely a School in which the map is not entirely worn out. If the present system of supplying Schools be done away with, it will open the door for unscrupulous agents to vend their wares, charging high prices and furnishing inferior articles. If the present wise supervision over the *kind* of library and prize books to be placed in the hands of our children be removed, it must not be expected that trustees will examine all the books which they may purchase for their Schools, and it will undoubtedly happen that books of a questionable if not a pernicious character, will be given as prizes to children, and will find their way into the libraries of our Public Schools.

James C. Brown, Esq., Inspector, Co. Peterborough.—For some considerable time past a noisy class has been assailing the Educational Depository at Toronto, and clamouring for its abolition. After making extensive inquiries respecting it, and having repeatedly thought over the whole matter, I have come to the following conclusions:

1. In no other way could the Schools of the country be so well supplied with maps, apparatus, &c., of the most approved description, as by the Depository. Even in many of the most remote Schools are to be found maps and charts as good as those in the best Schools of cities and towns. The case would have been very different had the Trustees been thrown upon their own resources, and brought into contact with those whose sole aim would be to dispose of their goods at a profit, and who would in many cases have palmed off upon them old and worthless trash.

2. The book trade has not been injured by the Depository. That trade is at present in a more flourishing condition than it would have been had no such Depository existed. The increase of general intelligence necessarily acts beneficially on the trade. The Depository has contributed in no small degree to that increase, and so far has assisted the trade. The gain to the trade caused by the Depository—indirect it may be, but still gain—has been far greater than the loss.

3. If, however, it could be shown that the trade was injured by the Depository, it would still be unwise to abolish the latter. The interests of the general community are paramount. Those interests should not be sacrificed to the advantage of a class.

James H. Knight, Esq., Inspector, East Victoria.—With respect to the sale of maps apparatus, and books by the Department, I beg to say that I think the removal of the Depository would be a most serious blow to the Schools. I admire the honesty which supplies large and small buyers at all times at the same price. If trustees got the idea that some peddler would be round at some future time with cheaper maps, they would wait for the peddler indefinitely, and if they could get 5 per cent. reduction by purchasing a larger quantity they would wait till they had more money. Again, but for the present arrangement, we should probably see the walls of our School-houses defaced with such sheets as we frequently see in hotels and offices, men and animals, ships and houses; one hardly knows whether to call them maps with pictures to them or pictures with maps to them. If it be desirable to have a uniform series of text-books, it is equally desirable that the maps should correspond to those books, and that can be accomplished only by

having the preparation under the same direction. The same applies to apparatus. Too much care cannot be given to the selection of books for the young, whether for prizes or libraries. The labour is great in any case, but is much less in proportion as the quality increases. It would be impossible for trustees or teachers to select books from general stores and insure freedom from the pernicious, as can be done by obtaining the books from the Depository. An experience of fifteen years has convinced me that the selection of books when left in your hands is as satisfactory as can be reasonably expected.

H. Reazin, Esq., Inspector, West Victoria.—I have the honour to state that during an experience of twenty years in teaching in the Common and Grammar Schools of this Province, and in my subsequent experience as County Superintendent, and as Public School Inspector, I have had many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the system and its effects, upon which maps, apparatus, prize books and libraries were furnished by the Education Department to the High and Public Schools of Ontario, and as far as my observation has extended, I can only state that the effects of the system have been highly advantageous to the educational interests of the country. The true light in which this subject should be approached, appears to me to be the *educational interests of the children of the Province*, in comparison with which the *commercial interests* of a few individual booksellers sink into insignificance—and in this light no valid argument has been adduced against the present system. Even with the advantages of being able to obtain those very essential aids to teaching and mental improvement for half price or less, teachers and Inspectors find it in many cases difficult, and in some cases impossible to induce trustees to furnish their Schools efficiently. Without the wise supervision in the selection of a suitable class of literature for the youth of the country, and of proper maps and apparatus for the Schools, which the present system gives, there is reason to fear that their reading would partake more largely of the "dime novel" character, and that our present chaste and elegant School maps would soon assume more of the American pictorial style and appearance. It has frequently been my painful experience to notice that the very booksellers who complain of the Departmental system of furnishing a properly supervised class of prize and library books to the youths of the land, are themselves in the practice of selling American dime novels containing both profane and immoral language, to any youthful purchaser who may offer. My personal experience would lead me to predict that not one-tenth part of our Schools would be fully equipped with those very essential requirements but for this wise provision of our Legislature. Were I to suggest any change it would be in the direction of making those things still cheaper, or if possible entirely free to the Schools of the country. I have indeed already petitioned the Department, and joined in petitions to the Legislature in favour of having maps and apparatus furnished free to all new and needy School sections.

James McBrien, Esq., Inspector, Co. Ontario.—In reply to your circular, I have the honour to say, that after due deliberation I am unable to suggest any reform in the principles regarding the Depository of the Department, for they are judicious and well adapted to the wants and conditions of the people. They make ample provision for the diffusion of pure, useful knowledge among the masses, and shield every man's conscience from offence. They never move off the platform common to all creeds, &c. All the School authorities that I have heard speak of them have expressed their entire satisfaction with the fulfilment of their orders, being adapted to the different religious persuasions, nationalities and ages of the pupils. My own experience is, that higher intelligence and more exemplary discipline prevail in those Schools which have embraced the privileges afforded by them.

David Fotheringham, Esq., Inspector, North York.—In reply to your circular respecting Public School Libraries, I have the honour to state, that in the 81 School Corporations reported in my last report to the Chief Superintendent, there are 36 libraries with 6622 volumes. The School population is 11548. The number of individuals making use of the libraries was 558. The number of volumes read 3183. The average number of volumes taken out by each applicant is nearly 6, and the proportion of readers to the population is 1 in 21, or *four per cent.* The P. S. libraries in my district may be pronounced a failure. Few are provided and these are made little use of. The taste for reading must yet be developed, as it does not seem now to exist. A very general complaint I find to be that the works, though good, with which existing libraries

are supplied, do not meet the tastes of those for whom they are designed. It occurs to me that if Inspectors and others were required periodically to hand in a list of works which would supply this deficiency, selections could be made therefrom with advantage, and the Department could still exercise the essential function of protecting Schools from the introduction of improper works.

Donald J. McKinnon, Esq., Inspector, Co. Peel.—In reply to your circular, I have the honour to offer the following observations:—(1.) That I believe the practice which has hitherto obtained in this Province, of encouraging the establishment of public libraries and the provision of a proper supply of maps, apparatus, prize-books, &c., by a Government grant of 100%, to be highly conducive to the best interests of our Schools and of education generally. The knowledge that they can do so at half-price is doubtless a great inducement to many trustees to procure educational "implements," which, because they did without them in their young days, (as they did without reaping and threshing machines) some people are only half persuaded their children can really need now. Prizes, too, would be much more seldom distributed, had they to be paid for in full out of the section funds. (2.) That if the Government grant were allowed on all School requisites purchased by the proper authorities, irrespective of where procured, or at what price, the trustees, who are generally men not accustomed to judge of the quality and value of such things, would be often imposed on, and worthless articles, such as Lloyd's "Map of the U. S. Continent" (which by the way has already found its way into too many of our Schools) would be palmed off upon them by "free-trade" booksellers and agents. It seems to me, therefore, that it would be impossible to continue the Government aid without some adequate supervision over the kind and value of the purchase on which the grant is allowed, and that it remains only to consider what kind of supervision would be at the same time most efficient and least expensive. It might, perhaps, be possible for the Department to publish a catalogue of maps, apparatus, and even library books, showing the price at which each article might be bought from any bookseller, and the Government percentage allowed thereon, the invoice having been certified to by some competent person, but this would entail an amount of labour and expenditure in all probability far beyond that spent on the Depository, and would, in my opinion, be much less satisfactory. In conclusion, I would give it as my not quite decided opinion, that the abolition of the Depository in connection with the Education Department would have a serious influence for evil upon our Schools generally. It is true that there are sometimes complaints, perhaps quite without foundation, that maps, books, &c. on the catalogues are often not in stock when called for, and are, sometimes, not procured so quickly as might be done by a private firm under the pressure of competition; and that when trustees and teachers visit the Depository to select books &c., they have not quite the same facilities for examining and choosing from the whole stock that would gladly be granted them elsewhere. But these objections point rather to the propriety of enlarging the stock and accommodation of the present Depository than to the advisability of entirely doing away with it. Indeed the truth seems to be that while many thoroughly appreciate the advantages afforded by the Depository, and many more are quite indifferent, there are almost none in this part of the country who are in any sense opposed to it. Before closing, I shall venture to offer a single suggestion, with much hesitation, however, as to its feasibility. It will be seen from my Special Report for 1872, that very few—say one in ten—of our teachers have even read any work bearing directly upon their professional duties. This is certainly much to be regretted; can it be remedied? The Depository supplies Normal School students with books &c. at half price, and the Government pays two-thirds the cost of books for Mechanics' Institutes; might not teachers, as individuals and as associations, be afforded the same advantages in the purchase of strictly professional works, and would not the country at large be quite as much benefited as in the other cases mentioned? But even as things are at present, teachers are certainly afforded advantages at the Depository which they can obtain no where else.

James C. Morgan, Esq, M.A., Inspector, North Simcoe.—I have the honour to state, with respect to your communication concerning the Book, Map, &c. Department, that very general satisfaction is felt with its working, throughout this Riding, and that I know no

improvement that could be made in its management, except perhaps (specially in the case of a new and poor section) to grant the 100% on *all* sums under $5 as well as over.

Robert Little, Esq., Inspector, Co. Halton.—In response to Dr. Hodgins' circular relating to the Depository Branch of our Public School system, I have the honour to make the following remarks:—Having selected for different Public School Libraries over 1,000 volumes from the Depository, and having also acted as a P. S. Librarian for nearly nine years, I attach the highest importance to the beneficial influence which a judiciously selected library exerts, not only on the minds of the pupils of the School, but on the adults of the section. I regard the establishment of a Public School Library *in every section* essential to the welfare of our system of education. A yearly addition should be made to it proportionate to the wants of the sections. When the number of readers is under fifty, trustees should be required to raise ten dollars yearly for the increase of the library. When the number exceeds fifty and is less than one hundred, one volume should be added for each reader. When the number exceeds one hundred, one volume for every two readers might be sufficient. In too many instances when trustees have procured a library, however small, they conclude that their duty in the matter is ended, whereas it is only begun. Instead of abolishing the Depository greater facilities should be given to its working. It is conceded that its establishment by the Department has fostered a desire for literature amongst the people. Evidence of this is so clear that even its opponents admit it. I observe that for every dollar's worth of books imported by the Department for the Schools, the booksellers import ten dollars worth for the public. Why restrict the sowing which yields such a bountiful harvest? Excellent books might no doubt be supplied to our Schools by other agencies, but I know of no system that could so effectually keep out trashy and worthless ones.

J. H. Smith, Esq., Inspector Co. Wentworth.—I have postponed sending in any observations on the subject referred to in your circular, until such time as I had completed my first visit to the schools of this county, and made careful inquiries concerning these matters, so that I might be able to give you, not only my own views but also a correct and reliable statement of the opinion of trustees and teachers in regard to the Depository system. The results of these enquiries are, that trustees and teachers have expressed themselves as being well satisfied with the present system, and consider it a great boon to our public schools. The reasons assigned by them are, that they are enabled, by the present system, to supply their schools with uniform sets of maps and apparatus; that they can obtain carefully assorted packages of prize books, and that libraries, suitable for their sections, can be obtained from the Depository for a moderate sum. Many trustees stated to me, that they would exceedingly regret to see the Depository system abolished, for, as they say, "if the law compels us to furnish our schools with maps, apparatus, library and prize books, it onght also to furnish places where they may be obtained." I therefore feel convinced that the policy of those who are actively engaged in carrying out the details of our present system, and of the friends of education generally in this county, is decidedly in favour of the Depository system. The Depository is now entering upon a new era in its most important work. Under the former School Act, the necessity of giving prizes, furnishing libraries for the school sections, and supplying suitable maps and apparatus, was brought under the notice of trustees, but not insisted upon to the same extent, as it is under the present Act. It is with no small difficulty that Inspectors are now able, with the present facilities, to secure such requisites as are essentially necessary for the management of our schools; and if these were done away with the difficulties would be certainly greater. The Depository system, if properly managed, (and the management is under government control) provides facilities for the diffusion of the recent improvements and corrections in maps and apparatus, and likewise acts as a guardian to protect the young from the evils of a trashy literature, by supplying them with library and prize books of undoubted value. I am of the opinion that the abolition of the Depository system would be a serious drawback to the advancement of our Public Schools.

M. J. Kelly, Esq., M. D., Inspector, Co. Brant.—In reply to your circular touching "the principles upon which Books, Maps, Apparatus," &c., have hitherto been supplied by the Department to the Schools receiving Legislative aid, I beg to submit the following observations: 1. I deem it almost superfluous now to offer arguments in favour of the establishment of Public, High School and Teachers' Libraries. Their importance has been long since conceded by the best and ablest men, and the necessity for such aid in the

diffusion of useful knowledge is becoming more evident to experienced educationists. In common with the great body of teachers of the time, I hailed with satisfaction the establishment of a Depository at Toronto, controlled by the Government, and under the immediate supervision of the Chief Superintendent of Education, for the supply, at greatly reduced rates, of such books, maps, and apparatus. The books and apparatus previously supplied for Township Libraries, School Libraries, and Schools, mostly by agents of large book establishments in New York, Rochester, and Buffalo, had been of a very inferior description, both as to binding and topography, as well as to general literary and scientific excellence. If any one is in doubt as to the accuracy of this fact let him examine the School Libraries throughout New York State and judge for himself. Besides, as their itinerant book-vendors were solely intent on making money for themselves and their employers, no regulations, for the proper management and preservation of the libraries were, as a rule, furnished, and the result was, that the books were speedily destroyed or lost. The books, &c., supplied by the Department have been of a very different character, generally obtained from British and Canadian publishing houses, and owing to the excellent rules prescribed by the authorities at the Education Office, they have been kept for years in a good state of preservation. From my long and varied experience in teaching in Ontario, both as a Public and High School Master, I have enjoyed exceptional advantages and opportunities of judging of the usefulness of School libraries as furnished by the Department in Toronto. I was in the City of Hamilton with Dr. Sangster, the founder of the Hamilton Schools, afterwards Head Master of the Provincial Normal School, when the Central School Library was furnished, and I remained long enough to note the excellent effect produced thereby, especially in the more advanced classes. The books, apparatus, &c., at that time procured, were excellent in every way. A few years afterwards, when Head Master of the Schools of the Town of Bowmanville, I was commissioned by the Board of Union School Trustees to select a library for the use of the Schools of that town. To the general excellence of the books and apparatus then obtained the people of Bowmanville will, I am persuaded, bear willing testimony. I have since, on many occasions, procured prizes from this Department and assisted in the selection of prizes and library books. I have also left the selection, not unfrequently, to Dr. May, or some other officer of the Depository, or at the discretion of the Department, and never had any sufficient reason to complain of the character of the books furnished. 2. I am familiar with the history of the opposition to the Depository during the last seventeen years. Little has been written or said about it which has escaped my observation. I read the Rev. Mr. Geikie's (a Toronto Bookseller) letter published in the *Globe* Newspaper, in 1858-9, I think it was—I have read the letters of others equally interested, I have read the *Globe* articles, and I have witnessed the periodical attacks which have since appeared in the same journal. I have never considered the arguments urged by any of these objectors against the maintenance of the Depository, valid arguments. That it has unjustly interfered with the "Trade," the "Trade Returns" disprove, the value of books imported into the Province now being nearly three times what it was twenty years ago. The further objection that the Depository creates a "monopoly" injurious to the regular trade is more specious than sound when all the circumstances are considered. The Government of a country ought to be solicitous about the general rather than the individual interest. It is surely one of the foremost of public duties to furnish the people with the means of education at the lowest practicable rates, and to see that the material furnished is of the best quality. 3. This duty has been, I conceive, faithfully performed, in so far as our Schools are concerned, by the Education Department, under the control of the Government. What care booksellers, generally, about the public good separate from their own? Their main object is gain. The education of the people is, with them, a secondary consideration. In my opinion, to throw open the right of supply to the booksellers, without let or hinderance, would have a most pernicious tendency and would inevitably lead to the introduction of an inferior class of books on science and literature. They enjoy now the principle of supplying all the text-books used in the Schools, and that is as much as can be safely intrusted to them, the welfare of the young and the interests of the country being kept in view. I should, therefore, regard the closing up of the Depository by the Government as a public calamity and an act fraught with mischief to the cause of sound and useful learning.

John B. Somerset, Esq., Inspector Co. Lincoln.—I have no hesitation in saying, that in

obtaining maps and apparatus for our schools, there should be some means of protecting Boards of Trustees against agents, &c., who would impose worthless trash upon them for good school apparatus, and I cannot imagine any better plan to accomplish this than providing a regular Depository, where well-chosen apparatus of every description may be obtained at fair prices. As a proof of the necessity of this protection, I may state that I have observed in many schools of this county—a large map mounted on thick paper (not linen) crowded with names and badly out-lined—in short, proving on close examination, to be a huge advertisement for a travelling circus; yet trustees are found who pay for such trash, nearly double the price for which a similar map, well mounted, may be obtained from the Depository. From this, it is evident to me that, were there no regular Depository, trustees would be at the mercy of a host of agents with inferior wares and oily tongues, as they are in many parts of the neighbouring Republic. In the obtaining of library and prize-books, the main object to be kept in view, in my opinion is, the selection of works calculated to elevate the tastes and sentiments of youth, by giving them access only to standard works in English Literature, and could this be done, were the trade exclusively in the hands of the booksellers, I think it would be the preferable method: but until this *is* done—and I have heard no feasible plan yet propounded by the opponents of the Depository—there must be some means adopted to keep out of children's hands, the trashy pernicious literature of the day; so that, while the present system may not be without its defects, it is infinitely superior to no system at all, *i.e.* leaving it utterly to the decision of the purchasers what books to select, without check or supervision.

James H. Ball, Esq., Inspector Co. Welland.—In regard to the policy of supplying our Public and High Schools with Prize and Library Books, Maps and Apparatus from the Depository of the Department, I beg leave to say, that I regard the policy as a highly judicious one, and one that ought to be maintained as part of our Educational system. Among the reasons that lead me to entertain that view, I beg to submit the following: 1. In supplying our schools with prize and library books upon a wide range of subjects, it is of the utmost importance that these books be such as to influence in a right direction, the youth of our country. The supervision necessary to secure this end can be most effectually exercised by the Educational Department, only such books being selected as are suitable to the object in view. By this means, moreover, school authorities have a guarantee, that in sending to the Depository, they will receive only such works as are of approved character. It is also important that maps and apparatus for our schools be of the best description. The same supervision, therefore, is necessary in regard to them, and the same means, in order that it may be equally effectual. 2. My experience as to the nature of the books supplied from the Depository of the Department, an experience extending over a period of about twenty years, leads me to estimate highly the advantages of maintaining such a Depository. The books that have come under my notice in connection with our Public and High schools, have invariably been of choice character, well adapted to their object, and have always given great satisfaction. The maps and apparatus also bespeak a pains taking supervision, and an aim that the execution of the work in this branch shall be the highest order. 3. The advantageous terms offered by the Department as an inducement to school authorities, to supply their schools with prize and library books, maps and apparatus Abolishing the Depository, therefore, and making it more expensive to supply them, could not but have a prejudicial effect upon our schools. Abolishing the Depository of the Department, moreover, I should regard as impolitic in regard to the development of trade, inasmuch as cultivating a taste for reading by means of prize and library books has an important bearing upon that question. And inasmuch as the Depository is maintained without entailing any expense whatever upon the Province, school authorities might justly regard it as a hardship to be compelled to purchase upon terms less advantageous than those offered at the Depository.

Richard Harcourt, Esq., M.A, Inspector, Co. Haldimand.—In reply to your circular I beg to state, that, for different reasons, particularly for those contained in your circular (Reply to objections, 3rd and 4th paragraphs), I deem the Book Depository to be an "essential" in our School system. I know from experience that, did we not get the 100 per cent. grant, I would have a great deal of difficulty in inducing trustees to purchase the requisite maps, &c. For a long time, I doubted the need of such a Depository, since it is just a question of indirect taxation; but the same point, as you observe, if carried out, would argue against the semi-annual Government grants.

J. J. Wadsworth, Esq., M.A., M.B., Inspector, Co. Norfolk.—In reply to circular asking my opinion regarding the Depository, I beg to say I am strongly in favour of maintaining the present system. From what I have observed during the past twelve years, as teacher and inspector, I am convinced that the Depository has supplied the Public Schools with maps, apparatus and prize-books much more *cheaply*, much more conveniently and much more judiciously than "the trade" would have supplied them. As to *cheapness* it is clear that the Depository can sell at lower figures than even the wholesale dealers of Toronto, for while the latter carry on business with a view to amassing a fortune, the Depository aims only at paying running expenses. It is plain, too, that by ordering direct from the Depository instead of through a local dealer, as it would be necessary to do were the Depository closed, the local dealers profits are also saved to the School Sections. As to *convenience*, the present system is unrivalled. It would, I imagine, be much more troublesome for trustees to visit, say, the county town, and there select from a limited stock, than it is to leave the whole labour of selection to the agents of the Depository. In the one case it would perhaps be a journey of forty miles—a day spent in an unpleasant and thankless task; in the other the mere mailing of a printed form. And why not send such a form to the local dealer? says one. This leads to the third point. The Depository can make a much more *judicious* selection than the local dealer. For the stock on hand is always larger than any private dealer could command. But could he not order from Toronto? He could, by referring to a catalogue—a poor guide. Besides, would a dealer, as a rule, order from Toronto while any books that would "do" were on his shelves? I believe that the local dealer, as a rule, would not send so good a selection of books as are sent by the Depository. Again, could we trust every local dealer to select books for our libraries, &c.? Would they be books of the right stamp? The aim of every merchant is not to sell the best article but the most profitable one. I need not enter into this question fully. It has been amply discussed by the press. There is little doubt that "the trade" would fail in making wise selections. While giving them credit for as much conscientiousness as any other class of men, I should be sorry to see the character of our public libraries and of our prize-books left entirely to their discretion. There is another strong reason why the Depository should be sustained, viz., that if closed there would be a large falling off in the amount purchased. From what I know of the manner in which trustees are induced in many cases to send an order for books, &c., I am sure that if there be any additional difficulty thrown in the way of procuring them the purchases would be seriously diminished. In rural sections trustees will fill up a form with alacrity, whereas as I have said above, the necessity of dealing with some bookseller would appear to be a serious obstacle. Besides, the Depository, by diligence and good management, has built up a business reputation. It has established a sort of business connection from one end of the Province to the other. Every trustee knows precisely where and how books, maps, &c. may be obtained. But if the claims of various rival local dealers have to be considered, the "pros." and "cons" will have to be discussed, then will be deliberation. The simple *carte blanche* to the Depository is by far the best means. Again, I hold it is absolutely necessary for the Government to continue for some years to come the plan of granting 100 per cent. on all remittances for books, &c. This has been done to encourage trustees to supply their Schools with what a modern School requires, so that a trained teacher may not find himself without the machinery wherewith to work in the way taught him at the Normal School. The time for discontinuing this encouragement has not yet come. The Inspectors state that in several counties hardly a map is to be found. In this county, old as it is, apparatus is very rare, and libraries are to be found in but 17 of the 103 sections. If a love of knowledge, a love of reading, is to be fostered among the people, it will be necessary for some time yet to extend the helping hand to all sections willing to meet it half-way. As for the cry that the rights of the book trade are being interfered with, I must say I never heard a more audacious misstatement. The Government has as much right to supply the needs of its Schools as a private teacher has to supply his pupils with stationery or books. The Schools belong to the people collectively, and the people collectively have a right to the cheapest and best supplies they can obtain. If they choose to import or manufacture for the Schools it is their undoubted right so to do. And that they are wise in so doing it is clear, from a consideration of what would follow if the Depository were closed. One or two Toronto firms would monopolize the whole business. The local

dealers would be subject to whatever arrangements of prices these firms might determine upon. If the business were so extensive as to induce keen competition among importers and wholesale dealers this objection would be less forcible. But it would not be so. The business is a specialty. If any firm went into the line it would be necessary to keep a large stock. And one, or at most two, firms would do so, and engross the whole business. For all these reasons I trust that for some years to come, at all events, the Government will sustain the Depository.

William Carlyle, Esq., Inspector, Co. Oxford.—In reply to your circular respecting the Department furnishing Schools with library books, apparatus, &c., I have the honour to state—1st. My own experience enables me to state that the articles supplied are satisfactory, both as to cost and quality ; 2nd. That the only parties agitating for a suspension of this function of the Department are such as are directly or indirectly interested financially in the change. 3rd. Trustees do not ask for a change. In this county a bookseller issued petitions among trustees for signatures, asking the Legislature to give the matter over to the trade, and to make the usual Government allowances to the School Boards. In many cases the trustees came to me with them. I did not hear of one being signed. 4th. In case the selection is left to trustees and the trade, such articles will be urged upon the attention of trustees as yield the best profit, to the sacrifice of uniformity and every other consideration.

Thomas Pearce, Esq., Inspector Co. Waterloo.—In reply to your circular I beg to say, that for thirteen years previous to my appointment, in July, 1871, to the office of County Inspector, I was actively engaged in teaching in the Berlin Public Schools. During that time I was eye witness of the distribution of several hundred dollars worth of Prize Books and scientific articles: I also had the opportunity of seeing a large amount of money expended for maps and apparatus. These articles were invariably procured from the Depository of the Department, and I must say, I never heard a word of dissatisfaction expressed, except by those engaged in the trade, or their friends. While a teacher, I looked upon the Depository as one of the greatest boons that our Educational system conferred upon us; and since I became Inspector and had an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with its working generally throughout the County, this opinion has been greatly strengthened. As far as I can ascertain, the question is agitated by interested parties only, and I do sincerely hope that our Legislature, in its wisdom, will calmly consider what the probable consequence would be if the Depository were abolished.

A. D. Fordyce, Esq., Inspector, No. 1, Wellington.—I would beg leave to state in reply to the circular issued by Dr. Hodgins, in reference to the Education Department supplying Library and Prize Books, Maps and Apparatus to the Public and High Schools, that I have ever considered and do yet consider the Depository a valuable section of the School Department. With me it is not a subject of doubt but of strong conviction, that School libraries have come into existence in the majority of instances solely through the means of the Educational Depository. It is true that the book trade in this Province has attained to such dimensions, now, that there is no difficulty in procuring any work that may be required. But School libraries cannot be got up as cheap from the booksellers as from the Department. I have had frequent opportunities of testing this fact from collections of prize books distributed in Public Schools, obtained from the local booksellers, where the prices were made as low as possible. In the technical language of the merchants, the profits were cut very fine, yet these books were not as cheap as the same kind procured from the Department, where they had the advantage of the 100%. Besides, in such collections of prize books I have often observed a number of works that were worthless trashy things, where the only object in view by the seller in disposing of such was commercial gain. I cannot conceive how it would be possible for the trade to supply the Schools as they have been or should be, with maps and apparatus. I cannot express my mind upon this division of the subject better, than by heartily and earnestly endorsing the note on page four of the circular containing the four reasons why the trade is incompetent to take the place of the Depository in supplying our Schools. From my lengthy connection with the working of our Public Schools, I am decidedly in favour of the Depository Department still being continued, at least so far as maps and School apparatus are concerned, and also works on education.

Rev. James Kilgour, Inspector, No. 2, Wellington.—I have to acknowledge receipt

of your letter respecting Public School libraries and prize books. I am obliged to you for reminding me of the subject, as it had been lost sight of owing to other work, and a desire carefully to examine the facts pro and con contained in the circular. My mature opinion is what it has always been, that by the facilities afforded by the Department for procuring libraries and prize books, a very great boon is conferred on the Schools of our land, and other Institutions which are treated on the same terms which I can only regret that they do not all avail themselves of. I consider the restriction which is meant as a guarantee for the exclusion of improper books is one that is highly necessary, and that the idea that the same works can be procured on equally favourable terms elsewhere, or equally good works, can only be very exceptionally correct, and that, taking one book with another, on the assumption that such may occasionally be the case, it would not hold good. Without minutely entering into the arguments used in combatting the assertion of injustice to booksellers and publishers, I would simply say that these arguments appear to me to be reasonable and satisfactory.

William Ferguson, Esq., Inspector, South Grey.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular referring to the "Educational Depository," and in reply beg leave to remark: I have been intimately acquainted with our School system for twenty years, viz., since my appointment as Local Superintendent in 1853. I have observed with very great interest the establishment of the Depository for the supply of maps, books, apparatus, &c., &c., and noted with great satisfaction the benefits which it has continued to confer by the facilities it affords to the School authorities. In the course of these years I have had many opportunities of conversation with intelligent parties of different shades of political and religious belief, interested in the educational questions of the day, a very large majority of whom appear to regard the Depository and its management with great satisfaction. Indeed, except during the first years of its establishment, almost every reference to it indicates great satisfaction.

William Alexander, Esq., Inspector Co. Perth.—I have to state in reply to your circular referring to certain objections that have been urged against the policy of supplying schools with maps, apparatus, prize books and library books, from the Depository of the Department, that my experience convinces me that the policy of the Government in encouraging the furnishing of schools with suitable maps, apparatus, libraries, &c., has been a wise one; and in giving effect to this policy, I believe no better plan could well be devised than the present Depository plan. No friend to educational progress, I think, could suggest that this generous government aid to schools should be discontinued, but some difference of opinion might exist as to how this aid should be given. Already two ways are adopted by the Government in aiding the establishment of public libraries—the depository plan, and the plan adopted in regard to Mechanics' Institutes. Some experience of both these plans decide me in the opinion that the former has been eminently satisfactory, all the government grant being devoted to its intended object, and that the latter has been extremely unsatisfactory in its results; in some cases not one-fourth of the government grant being devoted as intended by law. It is not my intention to urge all the points raised by the objectors to the present policy, but to give my own opinion. I have reason to know, I am firmly of the conviction, that to do away with the Depository, as proposed by some, would very seriously affect the very desirable end; that those who have the management and supervision of schools have been aiming at for the past few years, viz.: the supplying of all our schools with the requisite *means* of instruction. I *know* that the abolition of the Depository would give great dissatisfaction to school officers, and would be decidedly unpopular with the people. They would be slow to see that the failure of a few booksellers, to become rich out of the sale of maps, apparatus, &c., to schools, should be a matter of grave importance or national concernment. They would be unwilling to believe that a government policy should be shaped so as to serve the interest of a few rather than the public good. I believe it is admitted, by the objectors to the present system, that in the infancy of the school system, the Depository was needed, but they now contend that the necessity for this establishment no longer exists. I would ask, who are to judge whether the Depository is any longer necessary or not? Those who are anxious to profit by selling maps, apparatus and books to our schools, or those who have to supply the ways and means? The latter, I believe, should be the judges, and from observation and inquiry, I am satisfied that they are ready to pronounce a verdict in favour of re

taining the Depository on its present footing. The objectors assert that the Depository is an expensive burden on the Province, but I can assure them that the people fail to see how, making them pay two and one-half times as much for school requisites as they do now, would in any way lighten the burden. The establishment of the Depository was a necessity, the good it has done can scarcely be estimated; to-day it is as necessary and as useful as it ever was, and it would be a matter of much regret to me, if the government would yield to the importunities of an over anxious few, and in the least, lessen its powers, or impare its usefulness.

J. R. Miller, Esq., Inspector, South Huron.—In reply to your favour requesting the result of my experience and observations with reference to the Departmental Depository, I beg to state, 1st: That, during the ten years of my experience as teacher in the Public Schools, prizes, received from the Department, were distributed annually. When not in a position to select for myself, I requested that the selection be made by the Department, merely stating in my application that I required certain numbers at stated prices. The trustees and myself have invariably been well satisfied with the selections. In 1872, William Young, Esq., Reeve of Colborne, gave me $25 for the purpose of giving prizes at a competitive examination of the Schools in the Township. Application was made to the Department, $50 worth of books were sent, and all interested were highly pleased with the selection made. (2.) The libraries throughout my district are generally well read and highly appreciated, but on account of increased expenditure in providing increased accommodation, enlarged sites and apparatus, the libraries have not been augmented, but when these are secured, as they will be during the present year, then the libraries will be attended to. There can be no doubt in the mind of any reasonable person as to the great benefits derived from the literature disseminated throughout the country by means of the School library and the prizes distributed annually in our Schools. The people are being imperceptibly educated by these means, and if they are taken away, the taste for home reading must necessarily die out in many families, as the only sources of supply will be cut off. In a new country like this many people cannot afford to buy books, many more do not care to buy, but when they are forced upon them through their children, they will and do read them, and thus a taste for reading is created and cultivated, and of course results in great benefits to society at large. (3.) The check given by the Department in excluding questionable literature, is most salutary, and if a similar oversight could be secured in the selection of our Mechanics' Institutes and other libraries, our young people would enjoy scientific, historical and other works calculated to prepare body and mind for the duties of life, and we should not have to deplore the present age of dime novels and yellow-backed trash, which have such a powerful influence for evil. The taste for such reading is daily increasing and the result in many places is that the very best books in the library are scarcely or never touched, while worthless nonsense is swallowed down with avidity. (4.) Booksellers, in many cases, assure us that the 100% granted by the Department is all a sham, that they can sell books as cheaply as the Department. My experience goes to prove the contrary. I have applied the test of asking the price in the book stores of books similarly bound, the same subject and similarly bound, with a result in favour of the Department of from 10% to 30%. They cry out against a monopoly, while they are striving to create a form of monopoly that will entirely exclude thousands from the benefits of useful and wholesome literature. I think to do away with either the Library or Prize Book Depository would strike a heavy blow at our excellent Schools, and, at the same time, I think it will not secure an increase of revenue to those who so anxiously desire its overthrow. (5). To close the Map and Apparatus Department of the Depository will at once very seriously injure the working of our Schools. We gain in uniformity by having the supervision of one head; if we have many we will go back to the days of 20 years ago, when every teacher had a particular preference for the work of certain publishers. Uniformity of text-books has been secured after long years of hard struggling, and it would be a thousand pities to destroy that uniformity by taking away the very means that brought it into existence. Uniformity of work, uniformity in text-books and uniformity in maps and apparatus of all kinds are essentially necessary to success in the School-room. If we can gain these, then, the frequent change of teacher will not so much influence our Schools under the present mode of inspection as in the past, and as a consequence, our pupils will leave the School-room thoroughly fitted to perform

the duties of life. In conclusion, I may state that I have been frequently compelled to explain that the Department has nothing to do with the text-books in our Schools, further than to see that each publisher brings his work to a required standard of excellence. Many believe that all the books emanate from the Department, and that it has a profit on such. I think a few words of explanation in the "Journal of Education" would do much to remove this false impression. I may also state that, after consultation with a large number of teachers, while I find very few who think that a scheme could be devised and who would be in favour of handing over to the "Booksellers" the Library and Prize Books, all maintain that to abolish the Map and Apparatus Department would be a serious calamity.

Archibald Dewar, Esq., Inspector, North Huron.—In reply to your circular respecting the Educational Depository, I have the honour to state that I have always considered it a great boon to the youth of our Province and that, from what has come under my notice during the past two years, I am now more deeply impressed with its importance and usefulness than ever. Our Public School libraries are few in number and small in bulk, compared with what they really should be, and were the Educational Depository abolished, they would be fewer and smaller still; and all guarantee that nothing but a pure, wholesome and suitable literature would find its way into our Public School libraries be at an end. The various objections urged against the Depository, were I able to see their pertinence, would weigh very little with me as compared with the only way in which, as far as I can see, any efficient control can be exercised over the character of the literature to be circulated among our youth, in the shape of School libraries and School prizes, especially when it is taken into consideration that so many of the trustees leave the selection to be made when the books are procured. It is not necessary that I should refer, in detail, to the various objections urged against the Depository, as what I have already stated is quite sufficient to settle the matter, so far as my opinion is concerned, at least; until I have good evidence that every man engaged in "the trade" will be likely to exercise the same care in the distribution of literature free from anything of a doubtful character, that the Council of Public Instruction has hitherto done. To grant a monopoly to one or two reliable booksellers would be deprecated all over the Province. The Educational Depository has done the country good service in the past, is doing so now, and will, I trust, be allowed to continue doing so in the future, all grumbling to the contrary, notwithstanding.

Richard V. Langdon, Esq., Inspector, East Bruce.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a circular from the Department of Education, relating to the objections of some to the Depository. I am of the opinion that if this very important feature of our educational system be given up it will prove a serious blow to its prosperity. At different times I have had occasion to deal with the "Department" in the matter of prize books, maps, &c., and found the utmost satisfaction expressed by the trustees, for whom the articles were obtained. In every instance the books were carefully selected, so much so that it would be very difficult to make a better selection. There are but few School Libraries within my jurisdiction, and some of these are in a low state; but on enquiry I find this to be the result of carelessness on the part of the librarian, in not keeping a proper record of the names of parties receiving books. Several books are outstanding, and no one knows to whom they were lent. The interest that people would take in a properly managed library is thus destroyed, and the good effects lost. Objections are sometimes urged by trustees and and others, against public libraries, on the ground that the interest once felt soon dies out, and books are either lost or lying on the shelves unread. This could be avoided by a more judicious management, and a careful record kept of every book. I recommend the continuance of the Depository for the following reasons: (1) The articles required for schools must necessarily be of a better class when selected by parties whose sole business is to supply them, than those supplied by persons who look only to profits. (2) I look upon the Department as the only safeguard against a corrupt literature. Agents would soon flood the country with cheap, but, to a great extent, demoralizing literature. (3) I see no force in any of the objections urged against the Depository which, in my opinion, is a proof that we require no change. (4) The circulars issued by the Chief Superintendent, and containing information relating to the Depository

are so full, that any one giving them a careful perusal must acknowledge the wisdom of introducing so important an element into our School system.

J. C. Glashan, Esq., Inspector, West Middlesex.—I have delayed answering your circular that I might make during my School inspecting visits a thorough examination of the effects of the Depository trade. Thus I am able to speak not from vague opinions based perhaps on prejudice, but from opinions based on facts, or on the evidence of witnesses *specially examined* on the subject. *Maps, Charts and Apparatus.*—Of the maps and charts a sufficient supply fit for School use cannot be obtained from booksellers, and even such as can be obtained are suited rather for private offices than for Schools, witness Tremaine's map of Ontario, of which there are several in the Schools of the division hanging useless besides the Depository map obtained at a later period. Again, if left to purchase anywhere trustees will be troubled and many of them gulled by unprincipled *agents* for maps made to sell. Just before my appointment one of these so called agents went round with a highly coloured double map of Europe and America. The specimen he carried with him was well finished, I am informed, and mounted on strong canvas. On the strength of this specimen, he was backed up with any amount of orders, which were filled with an almost worthless map wretchedly mounted *on* paper, and within a year not one was fit for what *little* use could at first be made of it. If the Depository be abolished far fewer maps, few enough now, will be bought on account of the enhanced price that will have to be paid. Trustees rightly reason that if they pay the 100 per cent. in taxes, those taxes will not be lightened because of their ceasing to receive back an extremely small fraction in the shape of a premium on their maps and book purchases. Another means of expenditure will immediately arise and the community will simply lose the 100 per cent. Of apparatus it is sufficient to say that not even a numeral frame can be purchased in Strathroy. Where sales are few and distant in time (and they would be divided up among the smaller booksellers), high rates of profit must be charged. Apparatus would cost double or treble the present price.

Compare the prices of scientific toys, for prizes, charged by the Depository, and those charged in our shops. The arguments in favour of the Depository sale of maps apply with almost stronger force to the sale of prize books. The mass of rural School trustees are not readers, especially readers of books for children, the consequence is, if the teacher cannot make the purchase, books are bought for their bindings, or for their illustrations, or *because* they *yield a large profit.* True, Sunday School libraries are sometimes bought and distributed in prizes, but these should be given from the Sunday School ; the Public School should take a wider scope, religious books being only one kind. Man was made to *work* as well as *worship.* But why should not the teacher always select ? Certainly the hurried choice of a girl of sixteen or a boy of eighteen, with but little reading beyond that of school books, will be imperfect. Were the Depository done away with, and were the demand to lead booksellers to keep supplies, it will not in a year or two make our trustees and teachers competent to select to the best advantage. And this applies to the very sections most in need of this cultivation of reading tastes. Where trustees are quite capable of selecting prize books to the best advantage, in towns for example, there is generally least need of them so far as reading is concerned. In respect of libraries, the witnesses I examined were more divided in their evidence. On examining the testimony, the general opinion was decidedly in favour of the system as almost the only one that will generally establish free School Section libraries, but there was an almost universal complaint about the kind of books. One half is made up of excellent works which are highly appreciated, the other half consists of treatises written by men who had *read better* works and attempted to re-write them from memory. Many of them are works on Agriculture written in a dry repulsive style, describing operations and machinery out of date or wholly unsuited to our climate or to the capital of our farmers. It must be remembered that there were libraries fifteen years ago. Without the Depository I doubt whether professional libraries can be commenced or sustained ; certainly the hope of assistance from the Depository had great influence in aid of the movement at present on foot here to establish such libraries. There have been no sales of professional books to teachers in this division.

The only residents who speak from *knowledge* are ex-students of the Provincial Normal

School. Objections may be taken to the evidence of these as interested parties; such as it is, however, it is wholly in favour of the Depository. Many most valuable books were purchased and read that would not have been so but for the Depository. These must have had no small influence on the teaching of these students. To sum up, while there is on some points dissatisfaction with the Depository, as there will always be with everything human, there is much stronger feeling in its favour, and that, too, with reason. Trustees have enough to attend to without suffering from the frequent and persistent importunities of drummers and agents, too often sharpers, that would flood the country were the Depository abolished. The above contains the evidence collected, and the opinions formed thereon by one noways biassed in favour of the Depository, but who purchases from *the trade* all the professional as well as other works he needs.

A. F. Butler, Esq., Inspector Co. Elgin.—From an experience of twelve years in this county as Teacher, Local Superintendent and County Inspector, as well as from the united testimony of trustees and teachers, I am firmly of the opinion that the abolition of the book and map Depository would be nothing less than a *great public calamity*. The material of learning, now annually distributed among the people, would be at once greatly diminished: and since, from the nature and variety of the articles used in the schools, it is not likely that more than a very few booksellers would keep all these in stock, a *real monopoly* would at once commence. The present aid and facilities for obtaining maps, apparatus and prize books, have been to the schools here the right arm of strength; and should the question of cutting off the source of supply in its present form come before Parliament, I shall feel it my duty in their best interest to circulate petitions, and thus secure, if possible, against it, the votes and influence of our own local representatives. I may be allowed also to state, that since observing last winter, from a remark by the Premier of Ontario, that the step mentioned is in possible contemplation, I have, on many occasions during public lectures, brought the subject before the rate-payers, and that their verdict has always confirmed the views here expressed.

E. B. Harrison, Esq., Inspector, Co. Kent.—In reply to a circular received from the Department, I have the honour to state, that with the exception of some two or three trustees, who, some years ago, were not satisfied with some prize books which were thought to be small and not well bound, I am not aware of any complaints being made against the Depository of the Department. I have seen in some libraries, books that were not judiciously selected by the parties concerned, when the ability to comprehend them on the part of the readers was taken into consideration. About five or six years ago, a bookseller, wishing to increase his business, stated that he could supply the Schools in this County on the *same terms* as those offered by the Department. I made it my business to enquire into the matter. I found that books ordered from England would cost as usual, about fifty per cent. in Canadian currency more than the retail price in England, but any British work in *his* store could be obtained for as many Canadian shillings as its retail price was in British shillings, but the additional one hundred per cent. could not be allowed. I informed him that with his trade as a bookseller I had no desire to interfere, but if he attempted to impose on our Boards of School Trustees, by making false statements, he must not be surprised if I, as a Local Superintendent of Common Schools, would take every means in my power to expose him. Everywhere I have heard both trustees and teachers express themselves as highly satisfied with the Canadian series of maps. Occasionally single maps of Canada, &c., have been sold to them by peddlers, but a trial of them in the School-room soon convinced teachers and trustees that for Public School purposes those furnished by the Department were superior. I have frequently recommended to teachers works on teaching, school organization, &c., &c., and have invariably found the prices charged by the booksellers were higher than the prices on the Catalogue of the Department. Sheldon's Manual of Elementary Instruction and his Lessons on Objects cannot be obtained separately. I am informed that they are sold together for $3 50; at the Depository they can be obtained for $2 38, or separately at $1 20 and $1 18. As the Educational Depository has given general satisfaction since it was inaugurated to those connected with our Public Schools, and as there is no other way that I can conceive by which proper vigilance can be exercised on the kind of literature which might be introduced into our Schools, and by which suitable books, maps and apparatus can be obtained at reasonable prices, it would, in my opinion, be not only a grave

mistake but a crime to abolish it. Our Schools would be exposed to unscrupulous publishers and their agents. If the Educational Depository should be abolished, I trust that no Legislative grant will be given to Public Schools to aid them in the purchase of either library or prize books, but the money be applied to aid in the erection of approved School-houses, or to assist in the payment of teachers' salaries.

George W. Ross, Esq., M. P., Inspector, No. 1, *Lambton.*—In reply to your favour requesting the result of my experience of the Book Depository of the Ed. Department, I have the honour to state that my observations have never led me to find any objections, either to the character of the books sent out by the Department or to their effect upon the public. On the contrary, I am bound to say that I believe many Schools have been benefited by the inducements which the Depository affords of getting a supply of books at least nominally 100% cheaper than those furnished by the trade. I am also of opinion that in many cases township libraries have been established, that would not yet exist, were it not for the inducements offered. And I am quite sure that the two branch Associations of Teachers in my division have largely benefited by the supply of books furnished us less than a year ago. I have never had any fault to find personally with the Depository. I don't think it would be well yet to do away with it. I think it really serves a good purpose and not till the country is better supplied with facilities for getting a *good*, cheap and wholesome literature (if then) should the Depository be dispensed with. I believe the money spent by the Government in stimulating trustees and others to avail themselves of the benefits of good maps, apparatus &c. to be well spent, and so long as I believe it has the desired effect, so long will I rest satisfied with the existence of the Depository.

John Brebner, Esq., Inspector, No. 2, *Lambton.*—In reply to your circular in reference to the Depository for the supply of books, maps and apparatus for the use of Schools in Ontario, I would say: until those who propose to do away with the means now so fully, cheaply and uniformly providing for the requirements of our Schools, can propose some plan less open to abuse and more likely to prove efficient than any I have yet heard of "Let well enough alone." Many appear to forget that the Depository was not established either to benefit or injure "the book trade," but for the good of the public at whose expense it is maintained; and that so long as it furnishes fit and proper books, maps and apparatus as cheaply as the booksellers, every means should be used to strengthen the hands of the Department, for only by having the School requisite pass through the Depository, can it exercise effectual control over the class of books furnished for prizes and libraries. From what may be seen in many sections of the country, any one can satisfy himself if he will, that he would have strange, not to say bad, books circulated at the public expense, and maps, *e.g.*, "Lloyd's American Continent in 1900," utterly unfit for use in our Schools except as a means of rooting out everything like patriotism.

Theodule Girardot, Esq., Inspector No. 1, *Essex.*—I have the honour to state in reply to your circular that I am convinced that the books, maps and other apparatus, as now furnished by the Department of Education, are of great benefit to school sections; for the following reasons: (1) The Department acting under the direction of the Council of Public Instruction knows better what suits the schools than any body else. (2) Many School trustees would hardly agree to provide the necessary apparatus for their school, if they were not receiving the 100% from the Government, and I am really afraid that if this state of things should cease to exist, that I would have great trouble to compel the School Sections to provide for their Schools the objects in question. I fully approve the reply of the Department to the objections mentioned in your circular.

Jas. Bell, Esq., Inspector, No. 2, *Essex.*—Allow me to make a few general remarks on the subject of the assistance afforded by the Department to the Public Schools in providing library books, maps and prize books. The objections stated appear to be satisfactorily answered by the replies printed in the circular. It may also be said that the assistance above mentioned is almost necessitated by the consideration that unless the necessary means of following up the primary instruction received in the Public Schools are provided, the public money already expended will in some measure be thrown away. The art of reading, for example, would be a barren acquisition if not followed by practical application in after life. No doubt, books might be purchased by trustees from private

traders; but no one can doubt, that in that case, the number of Public School libraries would be very limited indeed. It is also of great importance that the books put into the hands of children should be judiciously chosen. That essential object is best attained by selection from a collection into which no bad books are allowed to enter. Reading books of an objectional nature has probably the same evil influence on the minds and character of young persons, as falling into bad company. The Government and the Legislature assume a parental attitude towards the youth of the Province, and the effort to direct the attention, and guide the taste of the young in the selection of suitable reading matter, is only a judicious carrying out of the same principle. And indeed, nothing can better further the interests of those trading in books, than thus imbuing the youth of the country with a taste for reading. Sir Humphrey Davy says, "A taste for reading may be justly considered one of the most valuable possessions any one can acquire," but I think that taste is seldom acquired from school books alone. Some persons of sensitive temperament have unpleasant associations connected with school books. An eminent physician, one also well acquainted with the literature of more than one language, has told me that he cannot read a book which has the outward aspect of a school book, especially of that peculiar style which prevailed at the time of his scholastic experience. The reading of school library books is a voluntary act, and not followed by any unpleasant consequences of that nature. On the contrary, as far as my experience extends, the books are eagerly sought after by the more advanced scholars, both on their own account and on that of their brothers and sisters at home. No more pleasant scene can be witnessed than the pupils of a Public School applying to the teacher, on the prescribed day, for the library book. It is gratifying to see the eagerness and pleasure with which the desired book is received, and the look of disappointment, when the coveted one has been taken out by some one else. In one township within my circuit, the township authorities at various times, have granted twenty dollars for maps, &c., to any School which applied for the same; till now, fourteen of the Schools have been thus supplied. The township is Colchester. I feel quite certain that but for the Government aid no such grant would have been made—and the majority of the Schools would have been without maps and globes, for the greater number of the School sections are poor, and I find it very difficult to prevail on the trustees in many cases to provide comfortable accommodation for the Schools. I have also been successful in prevailing on the several councils of all the townships within my circuit, to furnish the necessary funds to provide the tablet cards for all the Schools within their respective townships. This also was done on account of the aid from the Department. I have once heard a very judicious remark made on the general subject by the late Mr. Brown, father of the Hon. George Brown. He said, "The Legislature should be very liberal in fostering the Common Schools. There is less need of assisting the upper classes to educate their children. They can afford to pay for education, and their children will be educated at any rate—but Common Schools cannot be supported without Government assistance." It surely is unreasonable to object to the amount appropriated for the use of the Public Schools, even including the sum voted for books, maps, &c., while such large amounts are paid to the High Schools, the benefits of which are not generally enjoyed by farmers, but by the rich inhabitants of the towns and cities, who can better do without Provincial aid, than the inhabitants of the thinly inhabited townships.

Rev. James Porter, Inspector, City of Toronto.—I received a copy of a circular, signed by Dr. Hodgins, Deputy Superintendent of Education, respecting the policy of supplying the Public and High Schools of the Province with library and prize books, maps, apparatus from the Depository of that Department, accompanied with a statement of the principles on which those articles are supplied by the Department to the Schools receiving Legislative aid, and with other information on the subject; and inviting such advice regarding it as, in the interest of the Schools, I may be able to offer. I have carefully read the statement of principles and the information referred to, and have been in the habit for many years of reading whatever I have met with that has related to the questions they involve. The principles which seem to me appropriate to that question, and the conclusion to which they have conducted me, are the following:—The proper province of civil government is the protection of the persons and property of those for whose benefit it exists. Such protection cannot be adequately afforded, unless children and youth be rightly educated and re-

strained. 2. The education and restraint of youth devolve, in the first instance, on their parents or guardians; but when these private persons neglect to discharge their duty, the public welfare, which is the highest social law, requires that the State shall protect itself by means of public education and discipline. By common consent, through representative institutions, a Public School system involving instruction, training, and in some cases restraint, industrial teaching, and even penal and reformatory treatment, may come into existence and be permanently maintained. All that is necessary to the attainment of these objects will, of course, be conceded; but, as human nature is constituted, there will always be presented to those whose duty it is to organize and administer such a system, a temptation to undertake more than it really demands. What may be, under certain circumstances, temporarily useful may thus come to be considered as generally and for ever expedient, even if not regarded as absolutely indispensable. Another important principle is thus suggested, namely: That the power of civil government should not be exerted beyond the boundaries of its proper province. One tendency of governments is to over govern. The good of the people is so admirable and amiable an object that its pursuit may often be engaged in to the oblivion of the people's rights. Every thing apparently desirable and important in this world at least may become the subject of legislative provision, on the ground that it is for the good of the people; and food and clothing, education and medical treatment, as well as trade, commerce, and transit, and all the ordinary accidents of human life, may be dealt with according to law. It may be well to legislate for uniformity of text-books in Schools partly supported and therefore inspected by the State, and it may have been well to make provision as was done first in the State of New York in 1835, and in Massachusetts in 1837, for Common School libraries, but the best method of procuring such libraries may be and still remains a question. Intelligent practical educators may be glad to inspect any description of books and plans and models which relate to their business, but may at the same time desire to be free to purchase such materials as they require, in an open market unaffected by either bounties or restrictions. It is well known that Dr. Fraser (now Bishop of Manchester) when he visited this Province a few years ago, both privately and publicly argued against the perpetuation in Canada of a provincial book and apparatus Depository, which he uniformly represented as unsound in principle and injurious in practice.* Dr. Fraser candidly admitted that a British precedent for such institutions had been set by the Committee of Privy Council on Education, which, however he affirmed had seen and acknowledged its error, and had freed itself from the incumbrance and opprobrium which that error involved. My own conclusions from the principles above stated are that as the earlier portion of the British precedent has been adopted in this Province on the not dishonourable ground of temporary expediency and assumed popular advantage; so the latter portion of this precedent should now be followed, on the grounds of simplicity, broad and permanent expediency, and even on those of commercial freedom and equity. The imputation of unworthy motives to those who take either view of this subject may be very earnestly deprecated. Human motives, at least, are mingled, and men can scarcely be expected to fairly judge their own. Pecuniary greed is a very powerful motive, but not the only powerful motive to human action. A consciousness of social power and special influence, involving dignity and patronage, is not unpleasant to either an ambitious or a generous mind. But they who desire the abatement of what seems to them an injurious monopoly need not be

* *Note by the Chief Superintendent.*—Dr. Fraser was entirely mistaken in supposing that the Canadian system was that which had been adopted by the English Privy Council Committee on Education; whereas the systems are essentially different. The Privy Council gave its sanction to text-books in the hands of private parties, who had the monopoly of the sale between them, charged high prices, and realized enormous profits at the expense of the public; but the Council of Public Instruction sanctions no text-book for use in the schools without careful examination of it, and without having the printing and sale of it open to public competition—thus permitting no monopoly, and promoting both the improved quality and cheapness of each text-book published.

In England the Privy Council Committee supplied books and apparatus at certain prices, but through the agency of a publishing house, which realized large profits. In Canada the library and prize books are procured at the lowest prices; the maps, globes and apparatus are obtained by tender, and furnished to school authorities only (not to private individuals) at half cost prices. Mr. Lingen, for many years Secretary of the Privy Council Committee of Education, was convinced of the defects of the English system, and warned me against it. I was, therefore, careful to avoid them in devising a system for Upper Canada, of which Dr. Fraser was not aware.

charged with the former, and they who desire the maintenance of, in their view, a public benefit, need not be charged with the latter.

Prof. N. J. Dupuis, Inspector, City of Kingston.—In reply to your circular, I would beg to state that I have a high opinion of the utility of the Depository. I conceive that it would be scarcely practicable to keep the Schools of the Province properly supplied with apparatus without the Depository ; and I look upon the most of the arguments urged against its continuance as trivial and unwarrantable.

J. B. Boyle, Esq., Inspector, City of London.—In reply to your circular in regard to the furnishing of the Public and High Schools of the Province with library and prize books, maps and apparatus, I have the honour to state my views as follows :—

I have had some experience in the management of Public Schools, and for the last sixteen years we have had in connection with the London City Schools, a large and carefully selected library of some 2,000 volumes, on nearly all subjects. Every succeeding year furnishes additional proof, that the school library is a most valuable adjunct to our present system. In fact I can scarcely look upon a series of City Schools, properly graded, as complete without a public library in connection with the Central or High School, or both. I know of no part of a young person's education that requires a more constant and judicious supervision, than that which ought to be kept up over his usual course of reading. Our School system is designed and admirably adapted to develop the thinking powers, create habits of critical examination, and strengthen the power of continual thought. But experience abundantly proves, that, if left to themselves, our students in a majority of cases will indulge in a course of reading whose tendency is to counteract the effects of the training they receive in School. They will generally choose books that keep the mind in a state of excitement, beget the pernicious habit of reading without thinking, and in a short time the desire of improvement will give place to that of amusement. It can hardly be necessary, therefore, to point out how important is the exercise of sound judgment and nice discrimination in selecting the reading matter for our Canadian youth, during the period in which they attend school. We are at great pains in teaching them how to read, not as relates to the principles of elocution only, but so as to prepare their minds to elicit truth and detect error ; and yet, if proper care be not taken in the choice of their reading, they will very soon arrive at that stage, when everything is pronounced dry that does not furnish a sensation, or some stimulus of an emotional character. This results too frequently in impairing the mental vigour, and eventually in destroying all relish for serious thought and intellectual pursuits. Then the aims of the Legislature have not been confined altogether to the domain of mind. The cultivation of public morality, patriotism, and literary taste has received that degree of prominence, which the importance of these elements in the formation of national character, would seem to demand. But the kind of reading to be found in many of our newspapers, magazines, and cheap novels, is but poorly adapted to impart principles of morality, beget and foster a love of country, and give us just conceptions of the beautiful in art or nature. Here again there is great need of the intervention of the wise and good, in guiding the young to a choice of such works as will meet the views of the Legislature on these points, and lay the foundation of a Canadian nationality whose citizens shall be distinguished by high principles and correct taste. It is my sincere conviction, growing out of the experience I have had in these matters, that a Public School library well stocked with books selected with care and judgment, is the best aid a teacher can receive in his efforts for the attainments of these ends. Books may be had in the Depository of all kinds from grave to gay, and in every case, I believe, exert a happy influence upon the formation of character, in some one or more of the elements to which I have alluded. They may be chosen of a kind sufficiently interesting and amusing, and at the same time written in a style so superior, as to afford excellent examples for improving the literary taste of the reader. Then, while instructing the young with sprightly narrative, or by adventures real or fictitious, carefully kept within the limits of the probable, a due regard may always be had to the cultivation of the moral sentiments and correct principles of action. If books of a suitable kind be not provided for the pupils attending our schools, they will undoubtedly supply themselves, and the careful, observant teacher will know the demoralizing character of the books they will select if no care be taken to guard their choice. But if we judge of the future from the

past, if we try to estimate what will likely be done without the aid and encouragement furnished by Government from what has been done under the 100 per cent. grant, I much fear *that* all the Public School libraries provided for the youth of the country will be so few as to produce no beneficial effects on the people generally. Of maps and apparatus it is surely needless to speak. Most teachers and inspectors are aware of the difficulty they experience in providing a proper supply for the Schools, even with the assistance and facilities which the Depository offers. How very few of the 5000 Schools in this Province are furnished as they ought to be with both; and in cases where a pretty good supply of maps has been provided, how very seldom do we find the apparatus necessary to explain and illustrate the various branches of mechanical and physical science. Every experienced educationist knows how essential such apparatus is to the successful teaching of several of the subjects lately introduced into the High and Public Schools of the Province, and the difficulty that is experienced in rendering many scientific principles plain in the minds of the students without illustrative experiments. Now I have no hesitation in saying, that though the boards of trustees are slow in recognizing the necessity of providing their Schools with these requisites, yet without the aid lent by Government in this direction there is much reason to fear that a still worse state of things would prevail. A good supply of maps and apparatus, therefore, ought to be kept on hand at the expense of the State, and every encouragement given to their general introduction into the High and Public Schools of the country. I have never seen any objections worthy of notice to the State's rendering assistance in supplying the Schools with books and other requisites. Were it left to each board of trustees to buy maps, &c., where they please, and pay the full market price for them, a limited supply and inferior article would be the result. For the benefit of the country this business might still, with great advantage, be left under the control of the Department as at present. In regard to the usual objections urged against the "Government book-shop," as the opponents of the scheme are pleased to call it, I never could discover much weight. Booksellers pretend that it interferes with private enterprise; but these gentlemen seem to forget that the Government, in training teachers at the public expense, and in paying a part of their salary out of the public purse, is guilty of a more fatal interference with private enterprise in the case of the teachers' profession. In fact it has already interfered with private enterprise in this branch of business, to such a degree that the teacher of a private school may be looked upon as a defunct species, and his occupation as one of the lost arts. But it is not long since the teachers of private schools out-numbered the booksellers ten to one; yet those had to give place to the trained teacher in accordance with the ideas of a progressive age, and therefore if "the Government book-shop" be formed to meet any of the necessities of the times, the private trader will just have to submit. Still there is a question as to the extent to which the private trader supplies through the monopoly of the Government in furnishing public libraries. Does the old dogma of the economists, that demand and supply mutually beget and control each other, apply here in its usual simplicity? Is mental food subject to precisely the same laws as those that govern the supply of corn? In Britain for instance, given the number of mouths, and the amount of home produce in any season, and the complement in quarters that will require to be imported can be calculated to a nice degree of approximation. Can this be done with the supply of books? The very reverse is the case. Granted the material wealth of a people to purchase, then the extent of the trade will depend almost entirely on the intelligence and education of the people. But we have already seen that Public School libraries, when judiciously managed, are themselves educators, or aids to education; and, therefore, the greater the number of these libraries, other things being equal, the greater will be the general demand for books, and the greater the patronage an enlightened public will bestow on this branch of business. It seems to me then that the bookseller stands in his own light in opposing Government aid to Public School libraries. From as careful an examination of the whole subject as I am capable of bestowing upon it, I am led to the conclusion that the interests of education and the general progress of the country require a Depository of books, maps, &c., under the immediate control of a Government Department such as we have at present. It costs the country but a trifle, and this trifle is well bestowed in furnishing to our children at School a good class of books, in encouraging a taste for judicious reading, in preparing a good quality of maps,

and in seeing that these are used to the exclusion of all others, and in introducing into this country a style of School apparatus of various kinds, superior to that to which we were formerly accustomed.

Rev. H. J. Borthwick, M. A., Inspector, City of Ottawa.—I am in receipt of your letter referring to "Public School Libraries." I am pleased that I have now an opportunity of giving my opinion on the subject referred to. For many years back, in fact ever since the beginning of my connection with our Public and High Schools, in 1847, I have noticed with satisfaction and thankfulness the gradual development of our School system. For a few years after the above date, and until the "Library" system was put in operation, I know full well what a dearth of good books there was in various branches of literature, especially in the country districts, and I know also full well that after the "Library" system had been in operation for a period of years, a visible change in the same country districts was apparent (I refer to special localities within my own knowledge) in the increase of intelligence and a thirst for knowledge. I remember some years ago a discussion taking place in the "Press" in Toronto on this subject, and if I mistake not some, if not all, of the objections you refer to were brought forward by Mr. Campbell and ably refuted. The same thing occurred in this city, at least the objections were answered if not "ably refuted." In all my connection with the High and Public School Boards of this city, I have invariably urged upon them the necessity of using the immense advantages opened up by the "Library and Prize Book scheme," and I think that the gentlemen comprising our "Boards" are fully alive to their advantages, and avail themselves of them on every possible occasion. It would be a very easy matter to take up your quoted objections and show their absurdity, but this is done so well on the fourth page of the circular that little remains to be added. I can only add that my firm conviction is that if we had not this "Library and Prize Book" branch of our Education Department, that the progress of Ontario in educational matters would have been very slow indeed, and had all municipalities availed themselves as fully as they ought to have done of its advantages, our country's progress would have been much greater than it has been. There is no part of our "Public and High School system" which deserves greater support and encouragement, and whoever initiated it deserves the thanks of the whole community, especially of our School population.

Rev. J. C. Smith, M.A. Inspector, Town of Belleville. I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication anent the Depository. Absence from home has prevented an earlier reply. I have now, however, to say, that having somewhat narrowly observed the working of the book Department for a series of years, and having had ample opportunity of judging as to the practical results of the enlightened policy pursued, I regard the benefits accruing therefrom to the citizens of Ontario as really invaluable. I cannot conceive objections to such an admirable national privilege arising from any quarter save from self-seeking and dyspeptic cavillers.

A. McColl, Esq., Inspector, Town of Chatham.—In compliance with your request, I beg leave to state, that having carefully considered the subject in all its aspects, I have come to the conclusion, that the principle acted on in the Educational Department, is a truly wise one; that we have received much benefit from it, and that the abandonment of the policy of supplying Public and High Schools with library and prize books, maps and apparatus from the Depository of the Department, would operate to the great detriment of the educational interests of the Province. I may also state, that the Board of Public School Trustees were unanimous at their last meeting, in coming to a similar conclusion.

Rev. George Bell, Inspector, Town of Clifton.—I have the honour to state, in reply to your circular on the subject of library and prize books, &c., &c., that I consider the maintenance of the general principles on which the Depository is founded to be essential to the success of our public system of Education. Whatever alterations or improvements may be devised in the administration of the matter, I cannot well conceive how the proper uniformity of the material aids to teaching can be secured in any other way than by keeping the control in the hands of the Department of Public Instruction. In the supply of library books, a catalogue could be prepared by the Department, limiting all purchases to the books named therein as at present, and the books might be obtained from booksellers, but I do not see that this arrangement would be any improvement on the present one; and I can never consent to have trustees and booksellers at liberty to supply any-

thing they please to the School libraries, to be paid for partly with public money, without any power of supervision on the part of the Department. Such a liberty, in my opinion, *would be most disastrous, if not utterly ruinous to the library system.* I think the existing system well adapted to attain the end in view, and I believe it to be generally acceptable to the country.

Rev. James Herald, Dundas.—In regard to the policy of the "Department of Public Instruction" supplying the Public and High Schools with library, prize-books, maps and apparatus, to which you refer in another circular, I have always had but one opinion: and that is the policy is a wise one. If there is a Department of Public Instruction for the Province, the business of which is conducted by educated men who have a practical knowledge of educational matters, it appears to me altogether unnecessary to say that the selec tion of books for School libraries, and prizes, maps and School apparatus must be more efficiently made by them than by other classes of men. The policy is one which recommends itself, I feel convinced, to unprejudiced and uninterested minds. I have looked upon any prize books that we have got for our Schools here from the department, as the most suitable that could be got, and such as one feels a pleasure in putting into the hands of the young student. I sincerely trust that no interference on the part of interested parties will ever be permitted to prevent the Department of Public Instruction for Ontario from carrying out a policy that, I am satisfied is doing valuable work in forming the literary tastes of the youth of our province.

Rev. J. B. Muir, M.A., Inspector, Town of Galt.—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your circular, making enquiries about the advantages afforded by the Education Department in procuring books, &c., for the Public Schools. Last December the Public School trustees here got about $80 worth of books from the Department to be distributed as prizes amongst the scholars, and all concerned were pleased with the books. I believe they will expend as much more in the same way in July. So far as my experience and information go, I have nothing to say against, but everything to say in favour of the books and their prices, &c., obtained from the Department.

Rev. Robert Torrance, Inspector, Town of Guelph.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular, containing a statement of the principles upon which books, maps and apparatus are supplied by the Department of Public Instruction for Ontario to the Schools connected with it, and requesting the benefit of my observation and experience in the matter. In reply I have the honour to state as my deep and long-cherished conviction, confirmed by reflection and experience, that the Department, in undertaking to supply the educational institutions of the Province with School registers, has provided for a want which could not have been so well met in any other way; and that were they to be interfered with in the prosecution of their course in this respect, it would be a calamity to the interests of eduation throughout Ontario. Schools have the opportunity of being furnished at the Department with any articles requisite for teaching, and these of the most recent and trustworthy preparation, while the pecuniary inducements held out are such as to incite School corporations to furnish their School-houses with them, and give the teacher all facilities in imparting, and the pupils all the facilities in acquiring, instruction. I need not speak of the great benefit, not to say absolute necessity, of having every School-house supplied with proper apparatus. And there can be no doubt that if the Department were prevented from furnishing such, and the supply left to be procured from the private bookseller, many of our Public Schools would be altogether without them, or supplied with only an inferior sort. As the Board of School Trustees, Guelph, have not instituted any library in connection with either the Public or High Schools, I have no experience in the matter of library books; but as regards prize-books, I may state that I have the best reason to know that the selection kept at the Department is, on the whole, good, and that the terms on which the books are furnished are such as are fitted to stimulate education, secure the circulation of a healthy literature, and promote intelligence.

H. M. Deroche, Esq., M.P.P., Inspector, Town of Napanee.—I have the honour to transmit to you the following resolution which was adopted unanimously at the last meeting of our Teachers' Association for the County of Lennox and Addington. Moved by William Tilley, seconded by W. W. Madge, and resolved, "That this association considers the Depository Branch of the Department of Public Instruction a very grea

benefit to the cause of education in this Province by securing as it does, a uniformity in those school requisites furnished to the different Schools, and thus contributing largely towards the harmonious working of our School system, and by enabling trustees in every School section throughout the Province to obtain with certainty and despatch the School requisites, which, in very many cases, they would not know where to seek for elsewhere, that this association bears testimony, so far as the experience of its members enables it, to the evident pains taken on the part of the officials connected with the Depository department in order to give the utmost satisfaction in filling the orders submitted to them, and that, on account of these and other advantages, the abolition of the branch of the Department of Public Instruction is most earnestly to be deprecated."

Rev. Thomas Henderson, Inspector, Town of Paris.—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter. So far as my experience goes, and I am able to judge, I think it is for the interests of Education to have a Depository in connection with the Department for books, maps and School apparatus. The trustees of Schools throughout the Province have thus great facilities for the obtainment of all that may be required for educational purposes. It certainly is of the very utmost importance that prize and library books be well selected, and that all care be taken to prevent worthless and pernicious books getting into the hands of young people. In regard to our Schools, I know of no means better calculated to bar the evil and secure the good than a well-ordered Educational Depository. The reply to objections on page 4 of circular is, in my opinion, very satisfactory and ought to be well considered by all who are interested in the educational progress of our Province.

Dr. J. M. Platt, Inspector, Town of Picton. — I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular, requesting the result of my experience relative to the Educational Depository; In compliance with your request I have the honour to state that the result of my experience of former years, as a teacher, would incline me to look upon the "Depository" as an essential adjunct to our system of Education: and, during the four years that I have filled the position of Inspector, I have discovered no reason for changing that opinion. The extent to which any School is supplied with books, maps, charts, etc., depends upon the success which attends the teacher's representations to the board of trustees. In urging the necessity for a fresh supply of these useful auxiliaries, his strong arguments are as follows: First, the certainty of procuring those generally recognized as the *best*; Second, the simplicity of the procedure and the explicit instructions, always at hand, as how to proceed; Third, the extreme liberality of the terms upon which they are provided. Without the "Depository," competition and consequent confusion would bewilder both teacher and trustee, and neglect of duty would result. The "objections" quoted by you, as urged agaiust the "Depository" are, in my opinion, extremely weak. It is the duty of the Government to provide for the education of the youth of the land; and it is likewise their duty to adopt the *best* method they can devise without *extravagant* expenditure. If then, the Depository works well and is, as you say it is, self-sustaining, I can see no reason for recommending a change sought for by those who advocate it in the interests of their pockets rather than for the welfare of the nation. The principle of the Depository is sound—its results are beneficial—of the detail of its management I know nothing.

Rev. Ephraim Patterson, Inspector, Town of Stratford.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular, requesting me to state my views in regard to the policy of supplying the Public and High Schools of Ontario with library and prize books, maps and apparatus through the Depository in connection with the Department of Public Instruction. After having given careful consideration to the subject from every point of view, I feel no hesitation in expressing my conviction that the policy is a sound one Its adoption has, in my opinion, been the means of conferring a great boon upon the people at large, both parents and children, and therefore, in the interests of popular education and intelligence, I should much regret to see it interfered with by the Legislature. The objections urged against the system when placed side by side with the solid advantages accruing from it, appear to me to be unimportant. It is needless to say that, in every system of popular education, you must include all the agencies necessary to its success. And if the objections usually advanced against the principles upon which the Depository is established for the supply of library and prize books, maps, etc., through

the Education Department be well founded, they must be equally valid against the principle of committing the interests of education in general to the care and oversight of Government through some one of its departments. Shortly before the mid-summer Examinations of the High and Public Schools of this town in the present year, (1873) the board of trustees appropriated the sum of $70 for the purchase of prizes for the pupils. They promptly received from the Depository of the Department an excellent selection of books to the value of $140 ; and I may state that they were much better satisfied with their purchase in this instance than with the books which, for a similar purpose, they had procured in previous years from the "trade."

J. C. Patterson, Esq., Inspector, Town of Windsor.—I have the honour to acknowledge the communication from your office respecting the policy of retaining the Depository in connection with the Department of Education, and would state in reply that it is a subject on which I am hardly qualified to give a practically useful opinion, but will give you such crude ideas as have occurred to me on the subject. With regard to the 1st and 2nd objections, I am unable to see the force of them. I am heartily in favour of having the School libraries and prize books under the supervision of the Education Department, and think that to abolish the Depository, and permit prizes and School libraries to be furnished by "the trade," would be likely to result in consequences similar to those referred to by Lord Elgin in his report, and we would have a repetition of the "travelling peddler" nuisance. As to the "monopoly" charge, it seems to me that it would be as reasonable for the proprietor of a private educational enterprise to bring it against the free School system as injurious to his interests, as it is for "the trade" to complain, because the Chiefs of the Education Department, with the approval of the Government and the Legislature, and solely for the public good, and for the benefit of our children and our schools, have taken upon themselves the burden and responsibility of managing the Depository, and affording thereby increased facilities for the instruction and elevation of our children. Further, any one who thinks impartially about the matter must see that no one firm or two firms could afford to keep such a stock of maps, apparatus, globes, charts, &c., &c., as is required for the supply of our Schools. They would have to charge very high prices, or to keep very inferior articles. The 3rd objection seems to me to be childish. Our Legislature supplies its Schools with such articles as cannot be obtained of equal quality and for as low a price elsewhere, and with such books as require the supervision of educated and competent men. This suggests objection No. 5, and nothing can be simpler than the answer. There is not that variety among text books which is found among library and prize books. An authorized list of prize and library books would be almost an impossibility. But an authorized list of text books is simple and effective. In fact, to attempt a comparison of the two cases is absurd. That the Depository is an expense to the Province is officially denied, but even if it were, it has been an inestimable boon. By its means articles of School education have been placed within the reach of the poorest children in our Province, such as elegantly finished maps, costly apparatus, instructive books carefully chosen, &c., which, had they only had "the trade" to depend on, would have been quite unattainable. To me it appears that this constantly recurring controversy about the Depository is not creditable to our public intelligence. It is so palpably a contest between men, on the one hand, who are fighting selfishly for their own interests, and men, on the other side, who have had a long and careful experience, who have no personal gain to further, but who are striving only for the public good, the advancement of education and the placing of its advantages within the reach of all. I would heartily regret the closing of the Depository, or the curtailing of its powers, which, in my humble opinion, have been wisely exercised, and have benefited the rising generation of Canadians to an extent which it is impossible to estimate.

Hugh McKay, Esq., M. D., Inspector, Town of Woodstock.—The circular issued by the Educational Department is before me. In reply as I regret not being able to enter fully into the details of the whole subject, I will just give the general opinion that to my mind the whole institution is an admirable one, and considering the extent of its operations, it is open to but few exceptions. The principle upon which it is founded, I believe to be a correct one, and I can see nothing wrong in any department of state making special provision for its own institutions.

J. H. Comfort, Esq., M. D., Inspector, Town of St. Catharines.—In reply to the circular from the Education Office, asking my views on the policy of the Department supplying library books, prize books, maps and apparatus to the Public and High Schools, I beg to say that in my opinion the maps and apparatus required for the Public Schools should be supplied by the Department exclusively, as in that way only can uniformity in kind, which is absolutely required, be maintained. Library and prize books could, I think, be as well and cheaply supplied to trustees by booksellers as by the Department. I have had considerable experience in procuring books for the Mechanics' Institute of our town, as well as for different boards of school trustees, and have a decided preference to obtaining books in the way we do for the Institute—that is, leave the order with a bookseller of the town, and no difficulty or inconvenience is experienced in getting it completed and in good time. There need be no apprehension that pernicious and worthless books would be disposed of to trustees, as a regulation could be made requiring trustees to submit a list of the books they require to the County Inspector, or some other qualified person or persons, for approval. I showed the price list of books sent with the circular to the proprietors of the largest book and stationery establishment in the town, and he tells me that he will supply to trustees the same books at the price they are sold for by the Department.

Note by the Education Department.

To this letter from Dr. Comfort the following reply was sent, dated 2nd July, 1873: "The practical experience of all the American educators who have communicated with the Department on the subject is entirely at variance with yours; besides, to compel each of the 5,000 School Corporations which obtain prize or library books, to submit their lists to the personal supervision of Local Inspectors, would occasion great delay and cause endless inconvenience. That power is now objected to in its present simple and least offensive form (in the hands of the Council of Public Instruction and the Chief Educational officer of the Province, responsible to the Legislature). It would therefore never be concurred in, without endless disputation, were that power placed in the hands of a hundred local subordinate School Inspectors, as you propose. Besides, the lists which the Inspectors should be guided by would have to be revised and reissued every three or six months at the least, so as to have in them the new and approved works from the press. Booksellers all over the Province would also be expected to keep supplies of these new books. Although you say there need be no misapprehension that pernicious or worthless books would be disposed of to trustees, yet it would be done, as in the United States, by book peddlers; and by your proposed substitution of local for a provincial supervision over these, sales would soon be disregarded, or evaded in a way that could not be practically controlled without constant collision with School Trustees. I am aware that some booksellers, when applied to, have made the same offer which you repeat on behalf of a St. Catharines one, when they have had an object in view. The list was not sent to you for that purpose, but simply as a comparison of the actual prices of leading booksellers with those of the Depository. It is the normal condition of things, and not special cases of exceptions, which must guide the Department in matters of this sort. The question of the supply of prize and library books to Roman Catholic Separate Schools (and they obtain large quantities from the Department) has not been submitted for consideration, but it also is involved in the question, and must be practically dealt with. It would be difficult to get them to consent to the supervision of local school officers, who have by law no control whatever over their school operations."